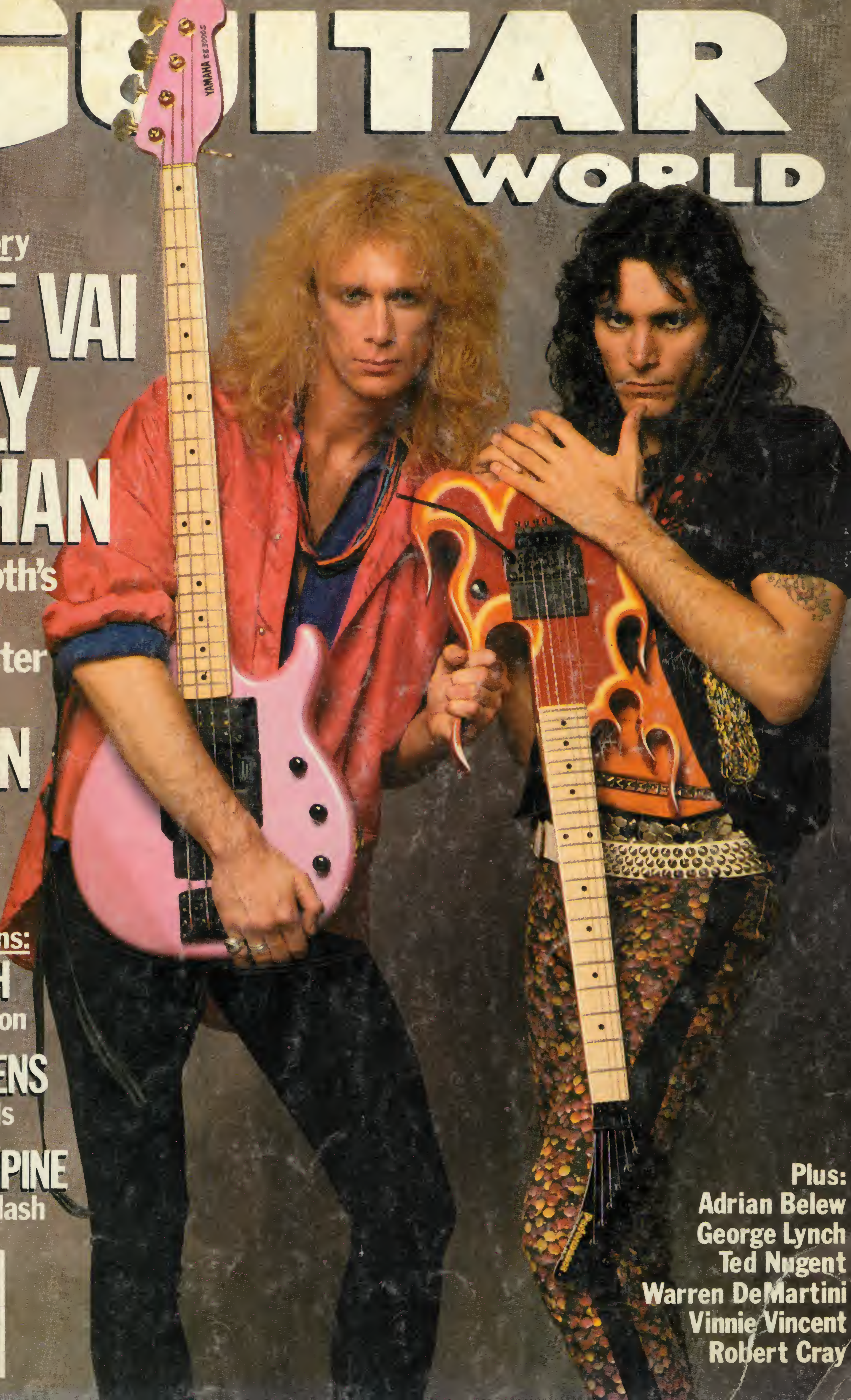
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GUITAR WORLD



The Inside Story

STEVE VAI & BILLY SHEEHAN

David Lee Roth's Two-Headed Guitar Monster

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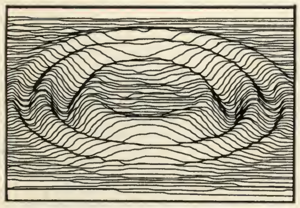
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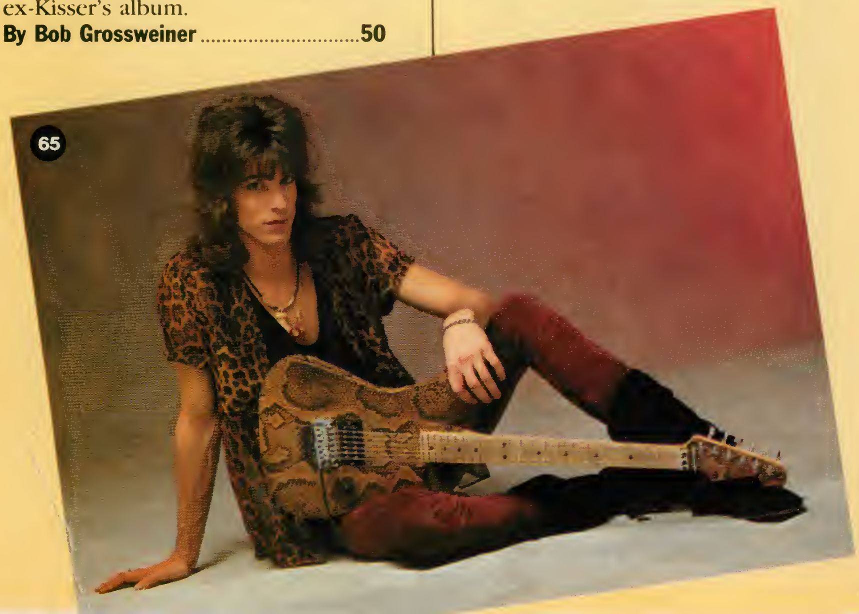
March, 1987
Vol. 8, No. 2

Features





Paul Natkin Photo Reserve



Glen La Ferman

Departments

VINNIE MOORE



Vinnie Moore uses DiMarzio Double Whammy™ pickups

If the direction of rock guitar is going to be rewritten in the coming year, Vinnie Moore is going to do it. "Not since spotlighting Yngwie Malmsteen... have I been so impressed by a new talent in the heavy metal genre, and I feel quite certain that Vinnie will one day have a place in the rock and roll hall of fame." So said Mike Varney, noted magazine columnist and record producer. We think so too.

By the time you read this, Vinnie's debut album on Shrapnel Records—"Mind's Eye", will be hitting the record stores. Once you hear it, we're sure you will agree that Vinnie Moore is destined to be a driving force in rock guitar. Also remember as you listen that Vinne plays Ibanez guitars . . . exclusively. Find out why Vinnie and so many of today's up-and-coming guitar heroes are switching to Ibanez. The answer is at your nearest authorized Ibanez dealer.

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THE WOODSHED

As we move into a new era in hope rather than backward in the mockery and derision we have, regrettably, overindulged in of late, the last word goes to the much-maligned Steve Vai. Steve, I learned some humility from your words in our cover story—"I don't want to participate in any weird type of media war. I'm not that kind of guy. I mean, I love Edward and I love Dave. I'm happy for their success and I'm happy for our success and I don't really care what goes on between them. Me? I'm just gonna have a good time." Consider this a *mea culpa*. You may administer "Stevie's Spanking" to me at will. For those of you about to rock, er, stone me with disgust over my seeming disregard for Steve's prowess, we salute you with our coverage of Steve Vai and Billy Sheehan—the two-headed guitar monster of, dare we say it, The David Lee Roth band.

They're here! After a few squeaks in the production line, the initial batch of Guitar World Air Guitars has come and gone—delivered in time for the yuletide season. We're sure all you air guitar players are out there in front of those mirrors, twangin'. And if you're bored with that already (if that could be possible)—why not try a real guitar?

—Noë the G.

GUITAR WORLD

March, 1987 Vol. 8, No. 2

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Cover Photo of Steve Vai with a custom-made Performance guitar and Billy Sheehan with his Yamaha BB3000S bass photographed by **Glen La Ferman**.

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SOUNDING BOARD

This Junior Ain't No Tot

My applause to Mark Bosch's Sound Check column on the Gibson Les Paul Junior in your November issue. Thanks to the exposure from your review, I am now the proud owner of a cherry-red Les Paul Junior re-issue, my birthday present to myself this past October.

But I disagree with Bosch's suggestion of black knobs instead of gold on the Junior. True, black knobs would match the pickup and pickguard, but this is a Gibson, not a Jackson. I think the gold knobs are like a "twinkle in the eye" of this guitar (much like the twinkle in Les Paul's eye in every picture I've ever seen of him) and lend that extra touch of class that one expects from a Gibson. I feel that if Gibson wanted a new guitar to take on the flashy appeal of most new models, they wouldn't have re-issued a classic like the Junior to accomplish that task. As Bosch said of his test model, the guitar looks and sounds great.

Bravo to Gibson for this one. I may be old-fashioned, but I prefer an instrument with class, not flash.

Christopher J. Van Sickle
Atlanta, GA

Roll Your Own

I enjoyed your article on Eddie Van Halen's guitar building. I feel more people should learn to assemble and set up their own solid-body guitars, as this is the only way for the average guitarist to own a perfectly set-up guitarsenal. Every electric player should be able to cut nuts, wire and mount pickups and apply a finish that will at least look good from 10 feet or so. Also, I must compliment Mr. Warmoth on his bodies and necks—I think they are great. I have two guitars and a bass built from his stuff, and it is top quality.

However, there were a few errors in the article which should be corrected. The machine Mr. V.H. is using is not a router, but a vertical milling machine—an expensive and heavy machine found usually in machine shops. Also, "Schwinn bicycle paint" is, frankly, rotten stuff. Use Ditzler nitrocellulose lacquer, or French polish shellac if you have a lot of time and no spray facilities. Oil finishes should only be used on dense, oily woods like rosewood or the exotics (cocobolo or padauk, like Alembic used to use). Polyurethane goes on race cars and metal airplanes, *never* musical wood!

I would like to share a little secret here. I have found a "new" finish for

continued on page 110

Typos Anonymous

Oops! We left out some information in last issue's MIDI Buyer's Guide. For information on the SynthAxe, contact: The Russ Jones Marketing Group, 17700 Raymer St., Northridge, CA 91325 (818) 993-4091. GW regrets the omission.

* * *

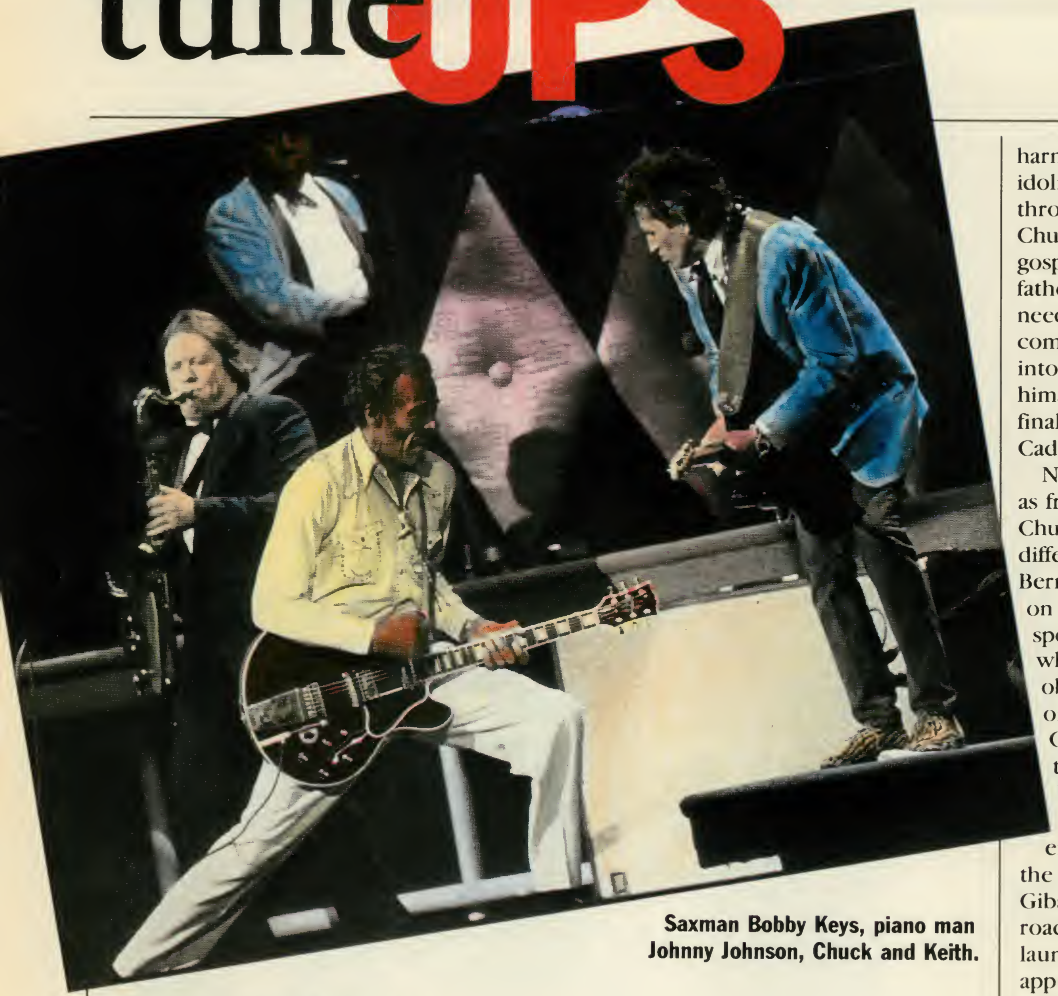
In last issue's Session Sounds column, Robben Ford was pictured with a Gibson 335 when in fact his current guitar of choice is a Fender Stratocaster.

* * *

Two-handed, doubleneck guitar ace Michael Angelo was misidentified in last issue's Tune-ups as Michael Batio due to the insidious rattlings of an overzealous proofreader, who dug into the guitarist's discology to produce his given name rather than his stage name.

tune UPS

EDITED BY JOE LALAINA



Saxman Bobby Keys, piano man Johnny Johnson, Chuck and Keith.

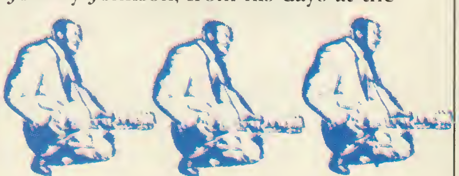
Photo by Ebet Roberts/Tinted by Dan Zedek

Chuck's Birthday

For those about to duckwalk . . .

This past October brought one of rock 'n' roll's Founding Fathers his 60th birthday— and what more fitting way could there be for Chuck Berry to celebrate that occasion than to throw an all-star concert? Actually, concert*s*, two in his hometown of St. Louis on October 16 and one at New York's Felt Forum two days later.

The St. Louis line-up, put together by Keith Richards to honor his spiritual father, revved it up and took off with some blistering rock 'n' roll. In addition to Keith, who was armed with a beautiful black Tele and a perpetual cigarette, Eric Clapton joined in for a couple of tunes, one of them a rousing blues with ringing tones dug out of his Gibson hollowbody. Critically acclaimed bluesman Robert Cray also sat in for a few numbers, bringing his own high-powered r&b chordings and cutting blues bends *à la* Albert King to the musical feast. Chuck's pianist, Johnny Johnson, from his days at the



Chess label in the fifties, rollicked his barrelhouse chords while Chuck Leavell and Bobby Keys served up tasty organ and scorching sax over Steve Jordan's solid drums and Joey Spampinato's pumping bass lines.



The list of celebrating celebrities did not end there. Linda Ronstadt dropped by to do some vocalizing for the first set, Julian Lennon attempted to harmonize with the man his father idolized, r&b belter Etta James tore through "Rock And Roll Music" and Chuck's own daughter Ingrid, no mean gospel belter herself, sang with her father with real authority. The crowd, needless to say, loved it all, going completely wild when Chuck dropped into his duckwalk and then topped himself by arriving on stage for the finale in—what else?—a hot red Cadillac convertible.

New York's birthday party was just as frantic and uptempo, though here Chuck fronted an almost completely different band. Dave Edmunds swapped Berry-style licks with the Man himself on a blond Tele; John Entwistle sported a custom-made ax, about which the ever-pointed Mr. Berry observed, "He musta picked that one up from outer space"; stalwart Chuck Leavell handled piano this time ; and Dire Straits' Terry Williams nailed down the beat.

In sharp contrast to his Caddy entrance at home, Chuck strode onto the Felt Forum's stage carrying his own Gibson still nestled in its case—no roadie laid a hand on *that* baby—and launched right into the ever-appropriate "Roll Over Beethoven," announcing, "Rock 'n' roll is 30 years old now." It is, but from the small but persistent technical problems that plagued this show, you might never guess that anything had changed from



those days when everybody clambered onstage and played out of one amp.

But quibble, quibble, quibble. As the boys in the band ripped through one landmark in the history of rock 'n' roll after another—"Sweet Little Sixteen," "School Days," "Nadine," "Carol," "Little Queenie," "Memphis," and of course, "Johnny B. Goode"—the crowd went increasingly berserk, dancing in the aisles (while the good-natured security guards turned a blind eye), swelling down to the front of the stage. One fan presented Chuck with a huge box, which he opened and found a little red rocking chair. "It's gonna be a long time before I use *that* baby," he deadpanned to the audience's appreciative roar. **—Gene Santoro**

Richie Sambora

Bon Jovi's axman ain't no pretty boy

Richie Sambora is simultaneously happy and upset—happy with the success of Bon Jovi and upset by the fact that the band can't get away from the teeny-bopper image bestowed upon them. "We're serious musicians," he says. "Just because Jon Bon Jovi is a good-looking dude, it's not his fault. And even if Jon is a pinup, he's still a bona fide musician with a lot of heart.

"In Europe, we're perceived differently than we are in America. More people care about what a band *sounds* like than what it *looks* like. In America, we've been portrayed the wrong way through videos and all those pictures of Jon looking pretty. I'll never forget one of the first photo sessions we did—we had a make-up chick, the whole bit. After she made us up, we looked in the mirror and said, 'Hey, we gotta stop this.' We looked like a bunch of fruits; it was like Aunt Mary went to Hollywood and came back with too much make-up. We downplay our looks now; we just put on a pair of jeans and rock out."

Slippery When Wet, Bon Jovi's third release, is the band's most successful album. Though Sambora's guitar playing is emphasized more than ever, his solos are neither particularly long nor overly flashy. "Come see me live and I'll wail," says the New Jersey-born axman. "On record I don't indulge as much, because too much crazy guitar playing takes away from the song. I just like to play melodies with as much emotion and power as possible. I may make all kinds of funny faces on stage, but I can't help it. I just *mean* what I play so much.

"Hey man, look at B.B. King. That cat can take one note and sing it for 15 measures and you get a hard-on. In 15 measures Yngwie plays about 400 notes. But it's still cool, because you say, *'This kid can fuckin' jam.'* My style falls somewhere in between.

"I never think about technique. I'm more from the older school of guitar players. I'm sure Eric Clapton never thinks about what scale he's playing, and neither do I. I'm not interested in playing this scale here and that scale there, or running the mixolydian mode into the lydian mode. I know that stuff. I took theory courses in school. And I



Ebet Roberts

got straight A's, too. I don't understand how that stuff comes into rock 'n' roll, the way I know it. Look at the Rolling Stones, those cats ain't worrying about the mixolydian mode."

Influenced by Clapton and Johnny Winter, Sambora began playing guitar when he was 14. "Listening to



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We Love This Kinda Stuff . . .

One of our fans sent this from a recent road trip to Music City, USA, and we thought we'd share it with you. Pictured bottom right is country legend Webb Pierce on the diving board of his dreadnought-shaped pool. We hereby solicit all you sharp-eyed, curio-loving readers to send us guitar-related popular culture artifacts. If we print 'em, you'll get a free subscription to this magazine.

guitarists made me happy from as far back as I can remember," says Sambora, now 26. "Guitar was a language that I understood. When Clapton bent a note, it communicated to me. So I said, 'I gotta get me one of those things.'

"To me, playing guitar is an escape. If I'm bummed out about something, I'll just pick up a guitar and the next thing I know I'll look at my watch and three hours have gone by. I'm lucky to be able to play well enough now to make myself feel good."

Prior to Bon Jovi's *Slippery When Wet* album, Sambora used a Gibson Les Paul and a Hamer Explorer on the band's previous recordings. "I started playing Stratocasters on this album," he says. "Both Kramer and Charvel made me some really nice Strats, all of which have maple necks and souped-up Seymour Duncan pickups."

Of all his guitars, Sambora's most prized possession is his Les Paul, custom-built by Rod Schoepfer in New Jersey. "I've been playing that guitar for about three years," says Sambora. "Whenever I use it in the studio, engineers can't believe how much space it takes up, eq-wise. They say, 'Damn, I have no room to put anything else around it,' which is all right with me."

All of Sambora's guitars are equipped with Kahler tremolos. "I prefer the smooth feel of the Kahler," he says.

Both on record and on stage, Sambora uses very few effects. "A Boss Overdrive is the only effect I use to make my sound happen," he says, "and my amps are all 100-watt Marshalls."

Sambora is quite content with his role in Bon Jovi. "When I get a chance to do my own record, you'll hear some wild playing. For now, all I want to do is play what's right for our songs.

"When we first hit the scene, people didn't know what a Bon Jovi was. So we said, 'Okay man, you think we're pussies—check this out.' We went on tour with two of the heaviest bands around, Judas Priest and the Scorpions, just to prove that our music has enough energy to stand up to theirs. We didn't tour with them to compete with them—in essence we're not a heavy metal band—we just wanted to put ourselves in that category because we didn't want to be in the same category as Rick Springfield. We're just a rock 'n' roll band with lots of energy. We come out at 100 miles-per-hour and end up at 150. Come see us live and we'll prove it."

—Joe Lalaina



Robert Cray

The blues' next generation

"I knew there was no money in it, but I love the blues," says guitarist Robert Cray, one of the youngest black blues artists to explode on the music scene in the past few years. "I like the real life situation—love and hard times. I can sing until there are no more people out there."

Though some might say the blues is a dying form of music, you couldn't tell that by looking at the pop charts. Cray is so revered by fellow musicians that Elvis Costello, Nick Lowe, Paul Carrack and Eric Clapton have each recorded covers of his "Bad Influence" (although none have been released yet). And Albert King has released Cray's "Phone Booth."

Born in Columbus, Georgia, Cray grew up in the state of Washington and cites Magic Sam, Buddy Guy and Albert Collins as main influences. Collins, in fact, played his high school graduation back in 1971. "I like Albert Collins' very percussive style," says the 33-year-old Cray. "It's the way he picks with his thumb.

"I also like the smooth sweetness of Otis Rush and B.B. King," adds Cray, who has a lyrical, fluid style of playing. "I pull my strings a lot like Albert King. I like Buddy Guy's style because it's frantic. He's crazy in a way, coming out of nowhere and playing those weird lines. I liked Magic Sam's singing and songwriting—there's a lot of tremolo in his songs. I also get inspirations from sax and piano, and I liked the way Thelonious Monk approached a song."

Onstage, Cray does not take any long solos, unlike most blues guitarists. "It's not necessary," he insists. "If you can't say it in a few notes, you shouldn't say it!"

And Cray says it all on his various Strats. His main ax is "an ugly, silver/off-green 1964 Fender Strat, which is not customized," he explains as he pulls the ax out of its case. "I took the toggle switch out and replaced it with a five-position switch because I broke the original three-way switch. I also have a new Japanese Fender Strat, which is a re-issue of the Strat from 1957-62. It doesn't sound as good as the '64, but it has a nice neck."

Cray also has a 1982 Stephens (made by Stephen Davies in Seattle), which is shaped like a Strat but has two DiMarzio humbucking pickups on



Lisa Seiffert

it. However, Cray doesn't travel with it because its sound is too bassy for him, so he has trouble controlling it.

In the past year, Cray has added a 1964 white Strat with a tortoise shell pickguard and a 1958 sunburst Strat with a maple neck but without tremolo to his small collection.

"I got out of playing Gibsons," he says about his personal switch back in 1979. "I only play Fenders now because I like the sound for rhythm and solos. When my band backed Albert Collins in 1976-78, I began to like the Fender sound. It cuts right through while the Gibsons stayed in the background with the rest of the instruments. My first album (the hard-to-find *Who's Been Talking*) was recorded with a Gibson, the next three (including his current Polygram lp, *Strong Persuader*) with a Strat."

Cray is consciously carrying on in the blues tradition. "I hope there are other people who are as stubborn as I am and just don't want to take the money and run by playing some other form of music," he states. "I don't think the blues is going to die. There are a lot of young, totally unknown blues players out there."

The fact remains, though, that most of them have not surfaced. Cray is one of the main people to watch when it comes to carrying roots music into future generations.

—Bob Grossweiner

Jon Paris

Wailing with Winter

A few months back, Jon Paris was doing some routine repair work on his '62 Fender Strat when tragedy struck. "I was using a single-edge razor blade, shaving a piece of the plastic pickguard away," he explains, "when the blade gave way and went into my finger. It cut a tendon pretty bad. Luckily, no nerve damage, but I had to keep my finger in a splint for two months so the tendon could heal without any damage. It was the first finger of the left hand. Not a very important finger if you're playing guitar, right?"

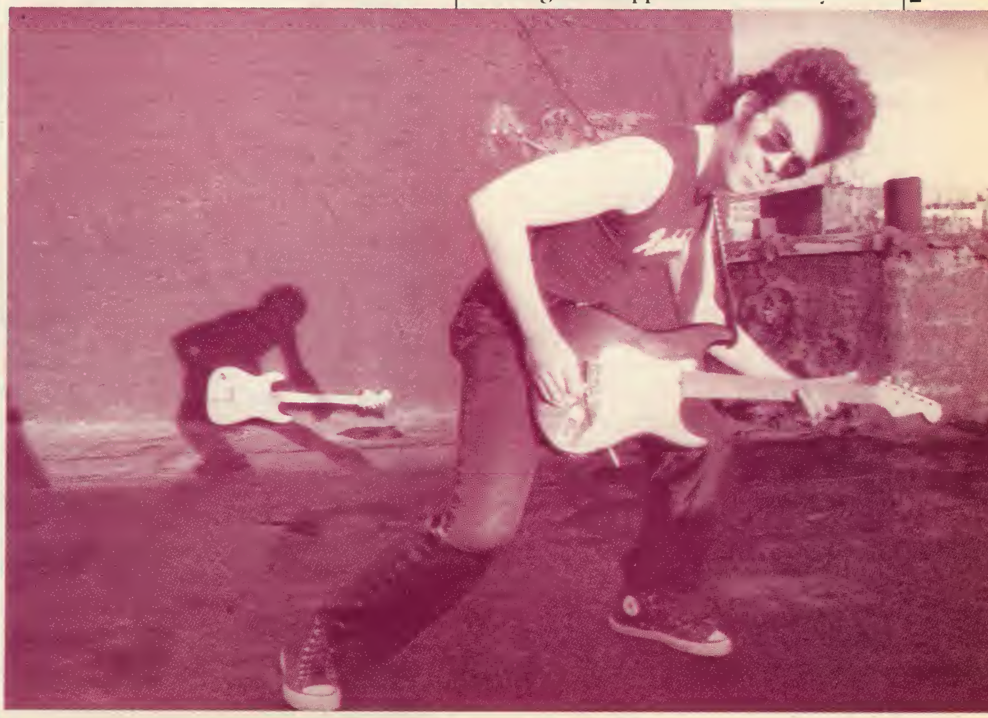
The splint not only cramped his guitar style with his own rock 'n' blues trio, Rock-Ola, but it significantly hindered his bass-playing technique as a member of Johnny Winter's touring band. But rather than pass up a tour with Johnny, the resourceful Mr. Paris just made do with what he had. "Looking at the injury from a positive side, it really forced me to strengthen up those other three fingers," he says. "But it was a struggle there for a while."

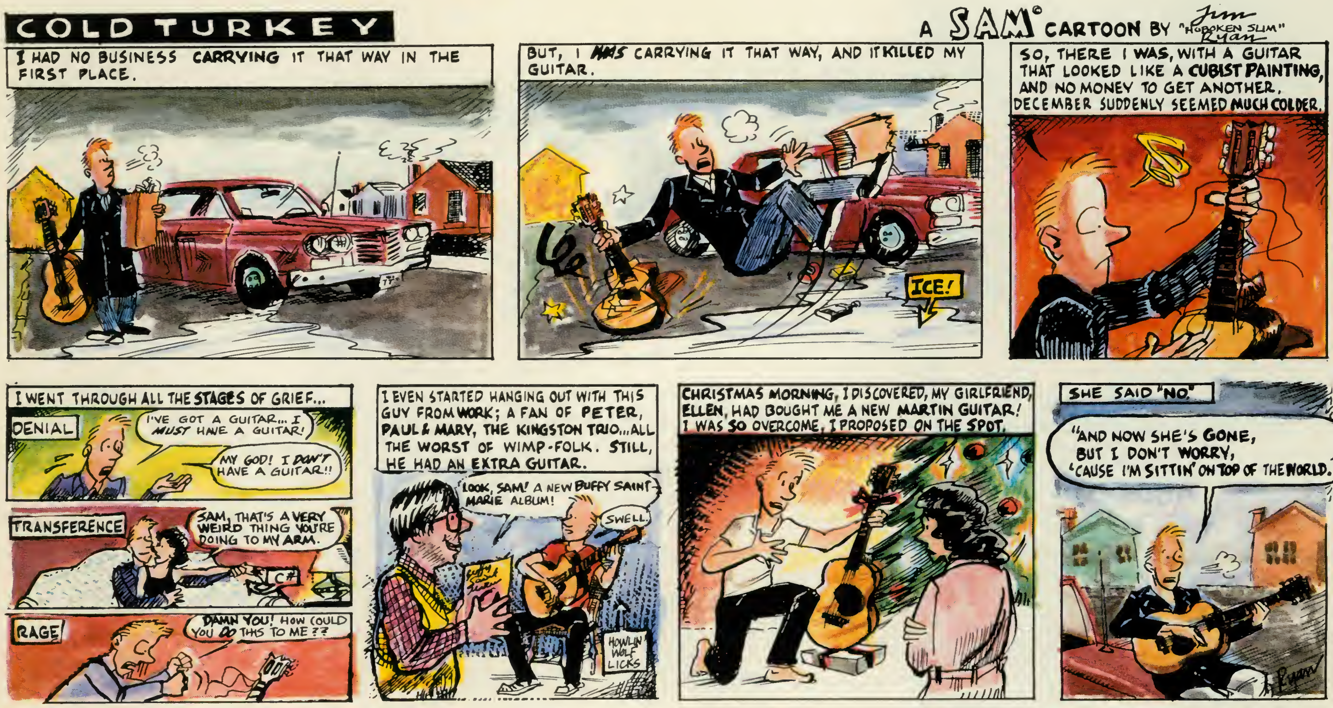
Getting around on the guitar was not as easy. But rather than cancelling any New York gigs he had booked for Rock-Ola (with Amy Madden on bass and George Morales on drums), Paris hired local bluesman Danny Draher to handle guitar chores while Jon got by on an open-tuned slide guitar. "We had no trouble getting through our Buddy Guy/Junior Wells routine. But it was pretty frustrating not being able to do the originals," he says.

Paris is back on track now, playing guitar and bass better than ever. Of course, the injury had no effect on his harmonica prowess, which has gained him something of a reputation in blues circles. Jon blows some pretty mean harp on tour with Johnny Winter, but he hasn't realized his dream of playing guitar alongside the great Texas axslinger. "Once in a while, like when we play in Milwaukee, we'll switch instruments and I'll get to play a fast shuffle blues in front of all the hometown fans," he says. "But my ideal is to have my band Rock-Ola open for Johnny, play a few tunes, then introduce him. You know . . . 'Ladies and gentlemen, it's showtime!' The whole James Brown routine. Then Johnny would come out and burn. It'd be a killer. I dunno . . . maybe someday it'll happen."

Apart from that fantasy scenario, Paris has been lucky enough to realize some dream-come-true gigs. "If nothing else happens to me in my

Bill Milkowski





career, I can say that I got to play 'Rumble' with Link Wray, I got to play 'Got My Mojo Workin' ' with Muddy Waters, I got to play 'Johnny B. Goode' with Chuck Berry and I got to play 'Rock 'n' Roll Hootchie Koo' with Johnny Winter."

Originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he headed up a sixties power trio called Ox, Paris moved to New York City in 1975 to seek his fortune as a rock 'n' blues man. A year later he went out on tour with Link Wray and Robert Gordon before meeting Winter in 1977.

Paris appears on the '78 Winter album, *Raisin' Cain,* playing bass and contributing the cut "Wolf In Sheep's Clothing." More recently, he appears on Winter's latest Alligator release, *Serious Business,* blowing harp on "Murdering Blues," "Good Time Woman," "Unseen Eye" and "Give It Back."

"I've learned a hell of a lot from him. Just hanging out with him and listening to the stuff that he listens to has expanded my knowledge and love of the blues. People used to tell me that I was a great blues archivist because I knew a lot of tunes and old artists. But for every obscure record I know, Johnny knows a hundred. And not only does he know the record, he knows how to play the tune, he knows all the words, he knows what label it was on and where it was recorded. It's phenomenal." **—Bill Milkowski**

Scott Johnson

Guitar meets Stravinsky

As a classical music student at the University of Wisconsin during the early seventies, Scott Johnson came up against some strong taboos. "You couldn't do anything in classical music that sounded anything like rock or jazz," he recalls. "It just wasn't accepted so it simply wasn't done."

Nevertheless, Johnson had an idea of incorporating the fire and fury of rock guitar into the classical idiom. He just never had the outlet for putting that plan into practice.

"I was studying classical theory by day and playing in blues bands by night, and I had a good time doing it," he says. "But eventually I started having less of a good time because the musical forms of the blues weren't complicated enough to interest me, even though I loved the sound of it. And as for the classical music I was studying, the forms were satisfying, but I didn't like the sound of a classical guitar. I was lonesome for the sound of an electric guitar, and I couldn't resolve this conflict. There just didn't seem to be a way out at that point, so I figured I'd drop the whole business."

Upon arriving in New York City in





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1975, Johnson turned his attention to visual arts and performance art. He began working with tape, creating loops for huge installation pieces and environmental sculpture works he'd exhibit in chic galleries around SoHo. His involvement in the Downtown Manhattan art scene led to collaborations with fellow performance artists such as Theodora Skipitares and Laurie Anderson, working in such experimental music spaces as The Kitchen and Franklin Furnace.

It was those early experiments with tape loops that ultimately led to *John Somebody,* Scott Johnson's debut album on the renegade Nonesuch/Icon label. Originally created in 1982 though released last year, the album represents a resolution of the conflict he had been feeling between European (classical) and American (rock) musical forms. Though classical in structure, it burns with sheer rock fervor at points, fueled by Johnson's aggressive one-man guitar army (via overdubs, tape loops and digital delay).

At a recent performance in New York at the Dance Theatre Workshop, Johnson performed his tour-de-force piece, "John Somebody," with tape accompaniment. For the rest of the evening he worked with his eight-piece ensemble. The music was full of disciplined stops, intricate harmony lines, odd meters and frenzied flourishes of 16th and 32nd notes, all tightly woven and precisely executed. The effect was not unlike some of Frank Zappa's more classically-influenced instrumental pieces like "Peaches En Regalia" from *Hot Rats* or material from Zappa's classic *Orchestral Favorites.* One piece, the recently-commissioned work, *Simple Engines,* carried a dual dedication to Charles Ives and James Brown. And, amazingly, it carried motifs associated with both those musical figures. Talk about fusion music!

Throughout the performance, Johnson sat on a chair with his left foot elevated in typical classical guitar fashion, his custom-made electric resting in his lap. His feet, meanwhile, were busy dancing on digital delay boxes and volume pedals and fuzz boxes. Hendrix meets Stravinsky. As a guitarist, he is finally fusing the seemingly disparate worlds of rock and classical.

What would his theory teachers back at the University make of this stuff now?

—Bill Milkowski


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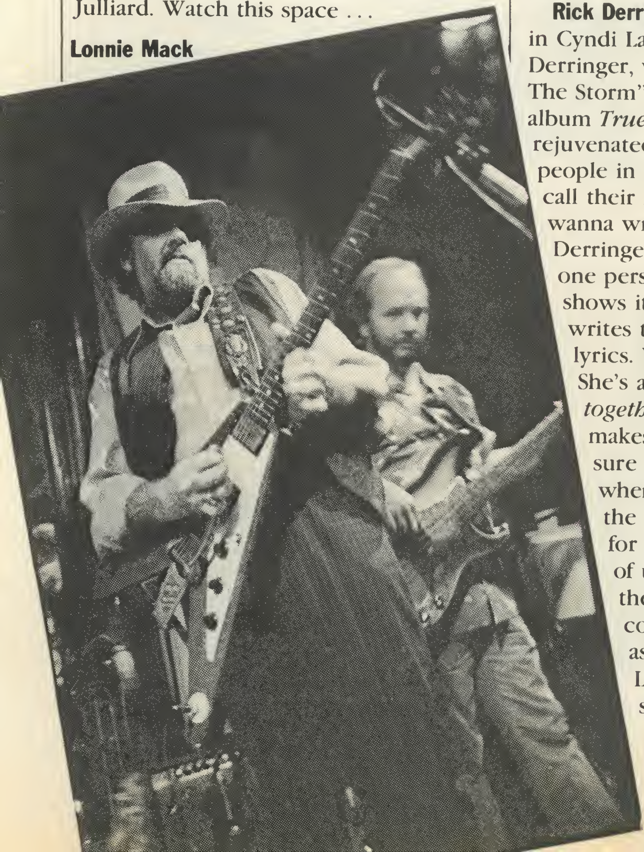
By the time you read this, tributes to **Jimi Hendrix** will have been celebrated at the time of his November 27 birthday. In Woodstock, NY, Jymi Graham's Aquatopia Productions was gearing up at press time for a concert/party at The Lake restaurant to celebrate what would have been Hendrix' 44th, with a little help from this magazine and the catskill town's native collection of Hendrix devotees and special guests like **Richie Havens,** Hendrix electronics tech **Roger Mayer** and Isley Brother **Ernie Isley**. Aquatopia hopes to erect a permanent memorial to Hendrix in the town. In Chicago, Hendrix' main man bassist, **Billy Cox,** performed a tribute with his band, Gypsy Suns and Rainbows at the Cabaret Metro. The indefatigable J.I.M.I. (Jimi Hendrix Information Management Institute, P.O. Box 374, Des Plaines, IL 60016) presented a display of "rare and unusual artifacts, videos and memorabilia" from their archives. Coming up in late spring or early summer is a major "Tribute to Jimi Hendrix" mounted by Hendrix estate curator **Alan Douglas** with star guests on the level of Clapton, Beck, Vaughan, Gibbons, Van Halen and other guitar greats who owe a debt to the electric guitar giant, planned for either Carnegie Hall or Madison Square Garden. The event will be a monster benefit concert, whose aim is to endow permanent scholarships in Hendrix' name at prestigious schools Berklee and Julliard. Watch this space . . .



Sonet

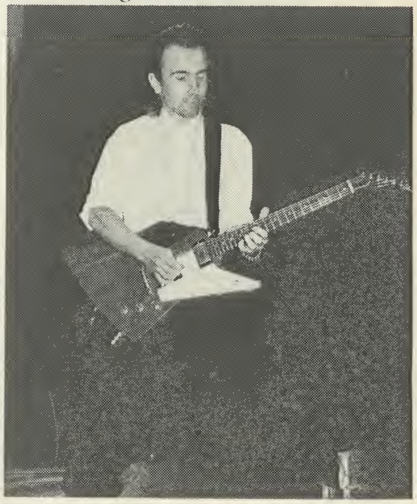
Elvis Costello joined Jimmie Vaughan and Kim Wilson for a faultless rendition of Willie Dixon's "Help Me" at a European Thunderbirds gig.

Lonnie Mack



Lonnie Mack's new album, *Second Sight*, contains shorter songs with less jamming than on his *Strike Like Lightning*. Mack says, "This is the first album I've had total freedom on from the concept through the mixes. It's contemporary in sound production, yet has a strong rock 'n' roll spirit. It's the best album I've ever done."

Rick Derringer has replaced **Aldo Nova** in Cyndi Lauper's touring band. Derringer, who co-wrote "Calm Inside The Storm" with Lauper for her new album *True Colors*, is now a rejuvenated songwriter. "Lots of people in the music business like to call their friends and say, 'Hey, you wanna write with me?' " offers Derringer. "Usually, it ends up that one person writes something and shows it to their partner. One writes the music, the other the lyrics. With Cyndi, it was different. She's adamant about writing *together*, not alone. That's what makes her so unusual. She made sure that we were both there whenever work was done on the song. We worked every day for a couple of weeks, and one of us didn't tackle it without the other." Derringer, of course, hopes it gets released as a single, considering Lauper's record-breaking success. "I like it better this way," he says about a songwriting collaboration. "I learned through writing with Cyndi that if you write a song with someone, you simply work together. We were both responsible for that song and worked on every facet of it with one another. It's much more fulfilling that way—especially when we're writing a song about being unfulfilled."



U2's **The Edge** has composed the soundtrack for the movie *Captive*. When The Edge was on a break and had nothing to do, he decided he wanted to do a soundtrack.

The winner of **Marshall**'s recent **Stun Solo Contest** was **Michael Sciuto** of Baltimore, Maryland, a bass player! His

tape was deemed worthy by the contest's esteemed crew of celebrity ax judges . . . which included **Steve Stevens, Elliot Easton, Elliot Randall, Eddie Martinez, Pat Thrall** and **Sid McGinnis** . . . **Alphonso Johnson** is on guitar and bass on "My Love, Her Inspiration," **Paul Jackson, Jr**. on guitar, **Larry Graham** on bass on "I'm Here To Stay" and **Stanley Jordan** on "overjoyed" (whatever instrument that is) on **Stanley Clarke**'s new album, *Hideaway*. Speaking of Clarke, the bassist joined **Adrian Belew** and drummer Stewart Copeland on the stage of San Francisco's Warfield Theater last November as they played in trio with *Rumblefish* images flashing on a screen behind them (Copeland composed the film's soundtrack). The occasion was "Music In Movies," a program of clips, trips and talk about that intriguing topic. . . . **Warren Cuccurullo** has left the crumbling Missing Persons to replace **Andy Taylor** in the touring version of Duran Duran with permanent residence still undecided . . . Former **Sammy Hagar** guitarist **Gary Pihl** has a cameo role on Boston's *Third Stage* . . .

Ray Coleman's ***Clapton!*** (Warner Books) is the first fully authorized in-depth biography of the rock guitarist, complete with a Pete Frame musical tree from 1963's Roosters through his 1984 band and a comprehensive 1964-85 discography including guest appearances and session work. See GW's exclusive excerpt elsewhere in this issue . . .

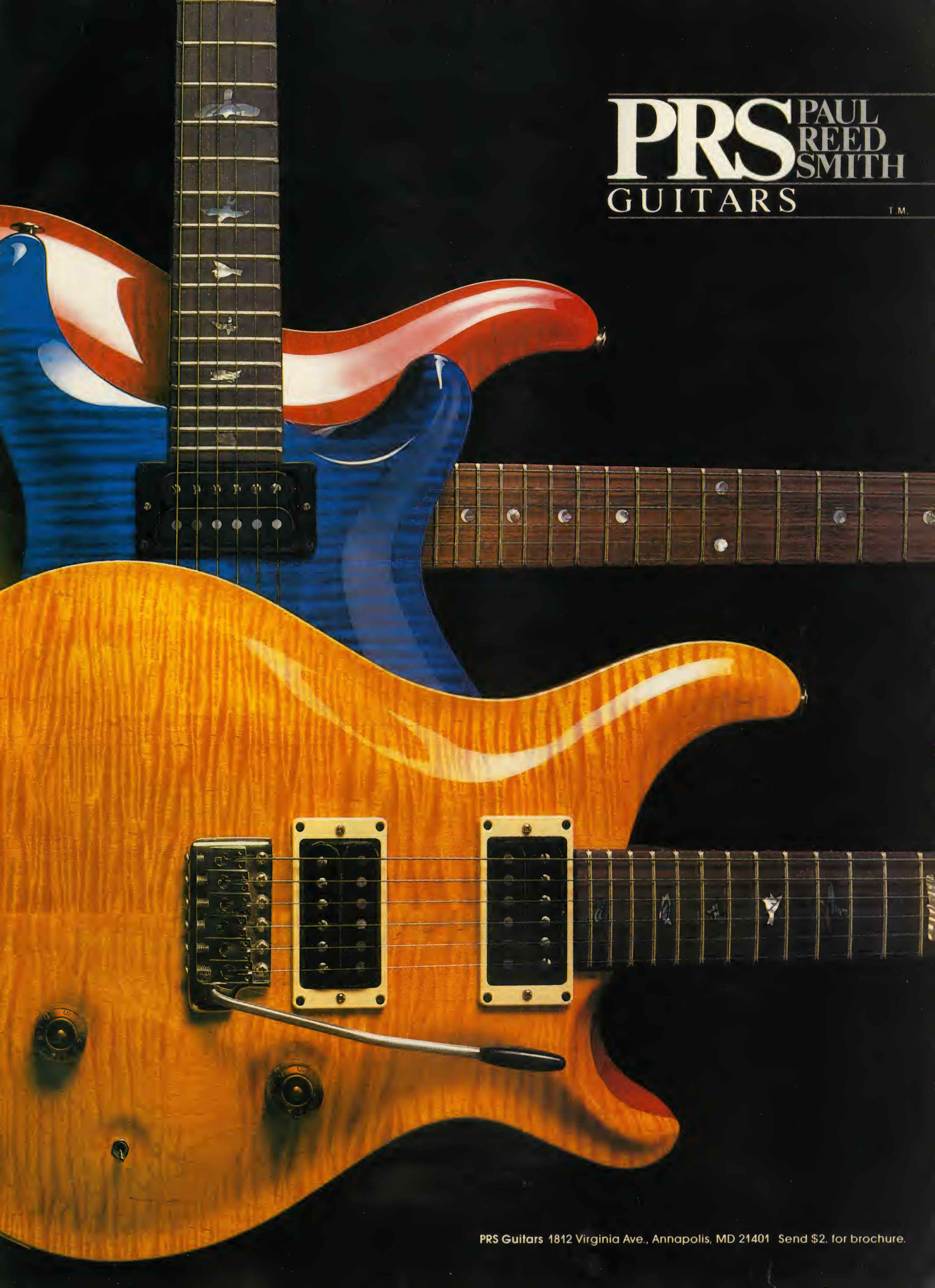


Artist Publications

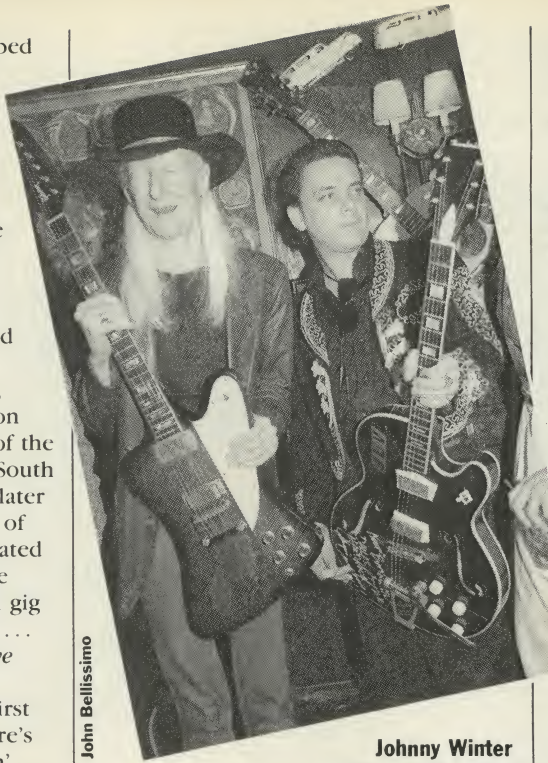
Adrian Belew, Stanley Clarke and Stew Copeland jam in S.F.

Impulse! Records has inked two ax players of note: **Hener Johnson**, who normally plays with Ramsey Lewis and Joe Williams and will not tour, and jazz guitarist **David Becker**. Becker, who has done clinics at colleges and tours America extensively, was sponsored by Martin Guitars and Bose speakers even before his debut album, *Long Peter Madsen* . . . **Larry Carlton** has signed a 13-record deal with MCA Records, split between the Master (country instrumental) series and jazz records. On his first-ever live album, he does two Miles Davis tunes, "So What" and "All Blues." The album contains blues and straight-ahead music . . .

Stevie Ray Vaughan collapsed in Switzerland in September and was


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hospitalized from what was described initially as exhaustion, but after complaining of an ulcer-like syndrome, it was diagnosed as "alcoholic over-indulgence." He cancelled 15 European dates, but not before his October 2nd show at London's Odeon, when he fell off the stage and hurt himself slightly. The Vaughan equipment that was reported stolen in last issue's Whammy Bar was recovered through the shrewd work of Albany's detective Richard Gerard, who worked night and day, even on his days off. First, $14,000 worth of the $20,000 equipment was found in South Nyack, New York, and a few days later the suspect led Gerard to the rest of the equipment. Vaughan was so elated that he invited Gerard and his wife down to his Radio City Music Hall gig in New York on Thanksgiving eve . . . Vaughan's new two-record set, *Live Alive*, contains a cover of Stevie Wonder's "Superstition," the lp's first single . . . Speaking of Vaughan, here's the latest report from GW's rockin' tech editor on the road, **Mark Bosch**. Bosch has joined MCA recording artists Broken Homes and is playing his way across the country as we write this. Broken Homes' schedule calls for them to open a series of east coast dates for Stevie Ray, most notably New Jersey's Capitol Theater on November 28. Way to go, Boschko! . . . **Jimmie Vaughan** guests on guitar and six-string bass on Ron Levy's Wild Kingdom's self-titled debut album. Levy was B.B. King's pianist for seven years. **Ronnie Earl** of Roomful of Blues also guests on the album.



John Bellissimo

Johnny Winter and Jimmie Vaughan donate their axes to Dallas' Hard Rock Cafe.

In a dual ceremony, guitarists **Johnny Winter** and the Fabulous Thunderbirds' **Jimmie Vaughan** gave guitars to the Hard Rock Cafe's permanent collection. Unlike some previous contributors, neither guitarist was unhappy parting with his ax. Winter presented an early-sixties brown Gibson Reverse Firebird, which he said "Looks a lot like several of my other Firebirds except that it has much more feedback than the others." Vaughan donated a late-fifties black hollow-body electric Harmony, which he used as a kid before his younger brother Stevie Ray Vaughan played it. The guitar will ultimately reside in the Dallas Hard Rock.

"It will be nice having it hang there," he said. "It is a Silvertone made by Harmony, like a Harmony Rocket, with a Bigsby tailpiece." Interestingly, the ax had JVL initial decals on it with "Keep Butt Rockin'—Dallas Hard Rock Cafe—Jimmie Vaughan" inscribed on it. And to make matters a bit confusing, someone placed a "Thunderbird" decal high up on the neck, which was never removed. —**Compiled by Bob Grossweiner**

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—Scott Thunes, Frank Zappa



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BELEW'S MENAGERIE

As told to Gene Santoro

It figures: if anyone was gonna take that tired old term "guitar army" and infuse it with a radically new meaning, it would be Adrian Belew. On *Desire Caught By The Tail,* his third Island lp and his first-ever solo recording, Belew deploys his Roland GR-700, a dobro, a mess of percussion and an awesome musical imagination to create a new musical voice that challenges and stimulates while it entertains. "I wanted to turn the electric guitar into some kind of orchestra," is how he puts it; and the album more than lives up to his conception.

That conception eschews typical pop song structures for more exploratory instrumental forms. Turkish zurnas and ungainly dancing cranes, chirping birds and bomb-dispensing airplanes, calliopes and sitars all inhabit the expansive canvas Belew has chosen to stretch out for himself. Fitting the recording between bouts in the studio with Laurie Anderson, Paul Simon and Cyndi Lauper, Belew and engineer Rich Denhart spent over 18 months painting *Desire's* dense musical textures. Getting up in the morning, having coffee and discussions with his wife Margaret (whose musical portrait makes up one of the album's cuts), cycling to the small studio near his home, Adrian sought to emulate the work habits of some of the artists to whom he pays tribute on this lp, artists like Picasso and Miro. His paint brushes and pallette: the nearly 200 sounds he's created with the GR-700 and the full range of studio techniques he's mastered, things like varispeeding and backwards recording. Like his friend and idol, Les Paul, Adrian Belew is never content to simply draw on state-of-the-art technology—he pioneers and redefines it.

Inside the fertile mind of ADRIAN BELEW, master of sound mixology.

Here, then, is Belew in his own words, discussing how he first got involved with guitar synths and how he uses them, and taking us on a track-by-track tour of *Desire.*

• • •

The first time I tried a guitar synthesizer was during Frank Zappa's rehearsals in 1977; it was the early model Roland, which was actually a dog [*laughs*]. Both Frank and I agreed that we would probably never play guitar synthesizer. The next time I locked horns with the synthesizer beast was in Japan while I was touring with Talking Heads. I went to a Roland center to try out some gadgetry and found out that they had improved everything about the synth with the GR-300. At that point I took a renewed interest: there was something in it that said to me, you can get something out of this if you work with it. So I bought one there and started working with it heavily once I got into King Crimson; I used it very little on the *Lone Rhino* album. I found that with all the external effects I had I was able to create some new sounds, but that otherwise, straight out of the box, I got pretty ordinary synthesizer sounds.





Photography/Ray Olson
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Then about a year-and-a-half ago I got the GR-700, which I think has dramatically changed my abilities with the guitar synthesizer, particularly because it allows you to design a sound from scratch, then refine it as much as you want and store it on a cartridge—things that keyboard players have had for a decade. So I jumped into the 700 full force and worked very hard with it, hours and hours every day, until I finally had catalogued nearly 200 sounds; I found things that I think it's not even supposed to do [*laughs*]. That coincided with the making of *Desire Caught By The Tail.*

To create sounds on the guitar synthesizer I work mostly by ear—you get something and refine it. See, I didn't have a manual when I got the 700, so the way I learned it was just to go through the programs they had in it, look at the parameters of each program and see what they did. In doing that I just found out all sorts of things about the machine, and so now I'm fairly proficient at trying to break down what the components of a sound are and refining that. There are a lot of instances where I discovered things by accident: the sound of the zurna, which is one of my favorites and is named after the Turkish instrument that it sounds like, was totally accidental. I don't know *how* I found it, but when I did, boy, was I happy [*laughs*]. You just have to get in there and start twirling the knobs.

Between various studio techniques I've learned and the possibilities of the GR-700, and combining these with the electric guitar techniques I already had, I found I had so many sounds available that I never even took the time to get into MIDI or sampling—there's none of it on the record. I prefer making the sounds up as I go along, taking one thing at a time. For instance, I enjoy using the synthesizer to extend the upper and lower ranges of the guitar by writing a program, say, two octaves above what can be played on a guitar. Another thing I like is the sound maybe a fifth above what I'm actually playing, and then jump back and forth between the actual note and the fifth, especially while I'm soloing.

So I began work for the *Desire* album by imitating various voices of the orchestra—a credible violin sound, a bass clarinet, a horn sound and so forth—but quickly discovered it was capable of much more. Particularly exciting were some of the Eastern sounds, by which I mean sounds that are microtonal in nature, which I'm enamored of. Those are all through the album, because I discovered early on that the electric guitar orchestra I wanted to create is made up of Western orchestra sounds, Eastern orchestra sounds and some natural sounds, which is why so much of the percussion on the album is natural, and why the dobro runs through a lot of it. But aside from the dobro and triangle, almost all the sounds come from the 700.



Mark Leialoha/Artist Publications

The Bears (l. to r.: Bob Nyswonger, bass; Adrian; Rob Fetters, vocals; Chris Arduser, drums).

The first thing I wrote, entirely on dobro, was "Tango Zebra," which is a 7½-minute piece of music that is a little difficult for me to perform, so for once I rehearsed it—something I never do [*laughs*]. I've developed a tuning for the dobro, E B E E B E, that combines with the instrument's metallic sound to remind me of a piano, and so I wrote everything in that piece on dobro, then orchestrated it; the dobro part served as a sort of piano reduction. We did all the tracking in three days because of that. The percussion on the front half of the song comes from me playing the back of the dobro with soft mallets through a percussion pickup, then varispeeding it to get those large metallic drum sounds. The percussion at the end of the piece comes from my tapping my electric guitar with a body pickup in different places, and running it through different delays. But all the topline things, like the winds, demonstrate the catalog of sound I've built up with the Roland.

My recording procedure was different for each piece. "Portrait Of Margaret," for instance, where the idea was to have ever-changing sounds from beginning to end to portray her changing moods, was obviously something you had to do in the studio, not something you could write at home on an acoustic guitar. And so, for that one we laid down the drums, then we went back and started dropping in one sound at a time, from the snarling guitar that opens it to the little birds.

"Guernica," which takes its title from the huge Picasso mural that's about war and chaos, was in large part accidental; I had no plan except that I wanted something that sounded like war. For example, the very beginning has the guitar synthesizer playing itself [*laughs*]. I found that you can make it do that by leaving the VCF pedal plugged in at one end but not at the other, and for some reason the thing just starts taking off [*laughs*]. So then I took that sound and ran it through a backwards reverb, and it was so horrendous and horrifying that we got very excited and I said, "We have to do something with this *quick*, right *now*, it's *doing* it." At that time we had on the 24-track a two-minute piece of drumming, and so we put the sound on that same tape. Well, later on I realized that the drumming actually worked with the sound [*laughs*]. And then we realized there were some backwards things on that tape that worked as well [*laughs*]. So the whole thing just fell together without my doing much except studying it, listening to it over and over until I realized what sense it made.



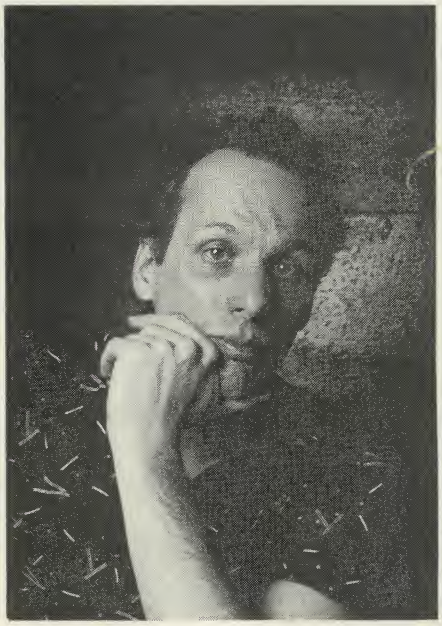
The idea behind "The Gypsy Zurna" is that here is an Eastern orchestra, those overtones and rhythms and so on; but it's also an electronic orchestra, because you allow all the sound processors themselves to finally come forth and start doing wild things. At the end, for example, there's what I call the flying insect, this metallic-sounding guy that flies all over the front of the speakers [*laughs*]. That's an old Electro-Harmonix echo flanger that I've had for years; it does only that one thing, and I've always loved it. The bottom line there is a Kleminger upright bass played with soft mallets through a delay unit with a lot of regeneration—it's a real closed flange, not sweeping, just sitting there bubbling. We put that sound down first, then the insect, then some more percussive dobro. In fact, it opens with an African log drum that's been varispeeded to become six African log drums; that syncopation was shown to me by Bill Bruford, one of the kindest things he's ever done for me, a beautiful double-sticking method that he used in "Waiting Man."

"Laughing Man" opens with one of those little boxes that laugh—it's got a little plastic record inside. I think of that one as being divided into two pieces of music that just happen to blend together. The first part, the carnival atmosphere, really came from my discovery of an accordion-type sound on the synthesizer, which I immediately wrote that piece of music with, played it over and over again and finally decided to make something out of it. The mid-section is the zurna sound again: at the end of the first part, where it changes into the second half's more somber mode, is actually a conversation between two zurnas, one two octaves below the other. In a way, this piece reflects the duality of much of my music: there's a happy-go-lucky side to most of it, but then there's a sober side that's almost melancholy.

For "Beach Creatures Dancing Like Cranes," I have in mind a picture of strange creatures on a beach on another

planet, and they're kinda jumping around, some of them with that herky-jerky David Byrne movement [*laughs*]. Even the motion in the production is like that: some of the sounds move around and take large leaps across the speakers, move to the back, come forward, always doing their little dance. It's a very visually-oriented piece of music in two parts, unified by the little flute sound that's always floating in the background.

The tabla-style drumming on "At The Seaside Cafe" comes from a GR-700 program in which you just tap the guitar in various ways and it creates those drum sounds. If you hit a harmonic, for instance, you get a high-pitched drum, and if you tap the low strings you get a *whooo.* It's totally surprising and now always predictable.



Mark Leialoha/Artist Publications

Guitar themes that appear all over the record, as well as the laugh from "Laughing Man," reappear on the last piece, "Z." The idea was not only to create a musical collage but to reiterate all those things that had occurred previously. The first 2½ minutes are backwards tracks, which are actually what follows for the next three minutes forwards, so it ties itself together quite nicely. The footsteps that happen at the end of the first 2½ minutes are the listener's, who is disgusted by all this backwards stuff and says, "I think I'll walk over to this other room over here." He opens a door and hears some more stuff and says, "Nah, that's not what I'm looking for either." So he goes over to the third door, opens it up and finds a little party happening there—there's where you finally get drums and everything you can relate to [*laughs*]. So the listener likes that a little better. Then at the end he gets fed up for the final time, shuts the door, and walks off. This is one of the pieces that's meant to be cinematic; they'd probably make very good videos, if anyone wants to take that on.


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DAVID'S D



BILLY SHEEHAN and STEVE VAI are no mere rock 'n' roll hired guns. We present their stories as they have never been told before.

Face it: David Lee Roth is one shrewd dude. No matter what others might say about him behind his back, Diamond Dave has entrepreneurial smarts. So he leaves Van Halen to go make a movie. Bad move? Perhaps, considering that the project never got off the ground. But the man's gotta be laughing at all the naysayers now. In recruiting bassist Billy Sheehan and guitarist Steve Vai for his band, Roth is now packing the most potent one-two punch in the business.

Yeah, the guy's got savvy. Sure, he's a ham. He loves the limelight. But he's smart enough to know that for every lascivious young lady in the audience who comes to see him do his smarmy bump-and-grind there's a stunned young aspiring guitarist or bassist out there who's digging on the dynamic duo. So Roth makes sure to vacate the stage at some point in the show and let the boys do their thing. For us, and for most of the guitar-bass enthusiasts in the audience, this is the high point of the show.

They begin with a bit of friendly challenge. Billy walks to the edge of the stage and launches into a veritable clinic on two-handed tapping. Vai stands behind him, mock-unimpressed. Then it's Stevie's turn. He steps forward, windmills a powerchord, lays on the wang-bar, then flies into a flurry of two-handed scalar runs that has jaws dropping all over the arena. He finishes, looks back at Sheehan and smirks, as if to say, "Take that!"

They go back and forth in this frenzied game of oneupmanship, reaching maddening heights of virtuosity, climaxing their duet showcase with a display of incredible two-handed unison lines running up and down their respective necks. The dexterity, the harmonic knowledge, the sheer command of their instruments is so mind-boggling, the conviction so intense, the execution so clean. Surely, these two are more than mere rock nean-

ISCIPLES



derthals. Given the opportunity, they could probably work up a set of Bach etudes and cut it with no problem. In fact, at the peak of their duet showcase, their fleet-fingered, two-handed unison lines recall the disciplined virtuosity of classical cellist Yo Yo Ma in duet recital with violinist Itzhak Perlman.

But make no mistake about it. Sheehan and Vai are rockers. They're each running something like 1200 watts of power up there. They're flying around on stage, tossing their axes in the air, teasing the girls in the front rows and loving every moment of it. They're both very satisfied, thank you, with where they are and aren't likely to leave it all behind in pursit of more "serious" music. As Vai put it, "I got a taste of the forbidden fruit, man. I'm playing with David Lee Roth! I'm on the road with one of the biggest rock bands in the world, and I'm loving it. So right now I want to do nothing else but this."

Perhaps their tenure in the David Lee Roth band was fated. Their virtuoso skills are so naturally wedded and complementary, they make the perfect pair—the Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker of hard rock. And their onstage camaraderie is refreshing.

"Billy and I are like brothers," says Steve. "He's a real pro. He's played over 3000 gigs in his life and I'm learning from all that experience. When he starts playing on stage, he has no limitations. That's when he's at his peak. And I see him do it, I talk to him about it and it's just a big inspiration to be around him. I probably couldn't be happier with anybody else, just from the influence and the inspiration of watching a pro like him do his thing."

Billy echoes those sentiments: "Not only is Steve one of the easiest persons to get along with, he probably knows more about music than anyone I've ever talked to or worked with. If I have a question about a particular scale or a chord voicing, I'll just ask Steve and he'll explain it to me. In return he'll come to me and say, 'Hey Bill, my wah-wah pedal isn't working,' or he'll say, 'When I turn this knob I get a weird noise from my amplifier.' Since I'm good at fixing equipment, I'll do that for him and he'll show me what mode I'm in. I've never worked as closely with someone as I do with Steve."

A great partnership, indeed. And it's only the beginning. Something tells us that Sheehan and Vai will be collaborating for years to come.

Photos by Glen La Ferman



STEVE VAI

THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

Steve Vai's career, thus far, has been a series of one hard act to follow after another. First, he replaced Adrian Belew as the resident wang-bar king in Frank Zappa's band. Next, he replaced the incredible Yngwie Malmsteen in Alcatrazz. And now, as the lone guitarist in David Lee Roth's band, he has the dubious distinction of being compared to Eddie Van Halen, at least in the mind of the public.

It's a precarious position to be in, considering that there's no love lost between Roth and Van Halen. On the one hand, Vai has undying allegiance to his current employer, yet he greatly admires Edward's undeniable virtuosity. But this is war. The battle lines have been drawn and Vai is caught in the middle, trying to remain neutral during all the gunfire.

As the 26-year-old guitarist puts it, "I don't want to participate in any type of weird media war. I'm not that kind of guy. I mean, I love Edward and I love Dave. I'm happy for their success and I'm happy for our success and I don't really care what goes on between them. Me? I'm just gonna have a good time." End of discussion.

What is it about Italians and guitar? All through the years they have been innovators on the instrument: Eddie Lang (Salvatore Massaro), Joe Pass (Anthony Jacobi Passalaqua), Pat Martino (Pat Azzarra), Frank Zappa, Al Di Meola . . . and now Steve Vai continues that legacy. Of course, if Eddie Lang were alive today he might not recognize what Vai does as guitar playing at all. The guy has evolved a vocabulary on the six-string that is Plutonian by traditional standards. The hammer-ons, the wang-bar tactics, the fleet-fingered facility, the sheer sonic inventiveness of it all is radical and revolutionary, albeit not without precedent.

Through countless hours of tedious woodshedding, Vai was able to attain a certain adeptness with the guitar, but he didn't stop there. He continued to push himself, practicing, probing possibilities and searching for new sounds until he took it to a higher level. Now, after an invaluable apprenticeship with Zappa and an interim period of self-assessment with Alcatrazz, Vai is coming into his own as a fully-realized instrumentalist. At this point, after honing his chops on a string of one-nighters all across America with the Roth band, Vai is at the top of his game. It's as if he thrives on the scrutiny. He knows who he's being compared to up there on stage and in spite of his respect for Edward The Great, he's not about to back down. On the contrary, he's pushing himself even harder. No time to rest now, he figures. Keep working, keep searching, stay hungry.

Consequently, he's improving (if you can believe that). In Zappa's band Steve played all the impossible guitar parts behind

BY BILL MILKOWSKI



Frank's solo excursions, and connoisseurs were impressed. In Alcatrazz, he stepped forward as a strong soloist in his own right, and fans were amazed. Now with Roth, he's evolving to a higher plateau. He's playing like a man inspired, reaching peaks of ecstasy in the process. It's becoming second nature. He's breathing the music now. He's playing more with his heart and less with his head. It's flowing through him. He's finally *expressing* himself with his instrument.

"Now I'm able to not have to think about what I'm doing and it just comes out," he explains. "It has to do with your own frame of mind and your own consciousness. It's like being at one, expressing myself with my body and my guitar in a synchronized way. It's become a flow, an emotion, where I'll play a lick and my body will just go with it. It's a beautiful, beautiful feeling. It's taken me a little time to get there but it's beautiful when it happens.

"It's a channel and it's hard to induce. The sound of your amps has a lot to do with it because that'll affect your frame of mind as you play. If everything sounds great, which it does most of the time, then it's easier to go into that void where you're able to just space out and communicate with your instrument and the audience."

To fully appreciate this enlightened stage at which Vai has finally arrived, you have to understand that he went through a very dark, desolate period to get there. It's a very personal subject; one that he doesn't wish to dwell on. But he does offer this:

"I was always a happy guy, you know? I mean, I was working for Frank Zappa, I was making money, I had a gig, I was fairly well respected in the music community, but something came over me. Sometimes you can't explain these things. Who knows what brings on depression? But it got to the point where I was questioning life at the time. I didn't understand what was going on. But nobody knew. I kept everything to myself, pretty much. Although I was a different guy on the outside, I guess. I felt like I had lost my sense of humor. And I felt like my body was deteriorating. It was a very black period in my life. And I realized that if I didn't do something, I would die."

He continues in a contemplative tone. "I'm sure a lot of people can relate to what I'm saying. Something comes over you, you hit rock bottom ... then bang! You come right back up. You get through it, you figure it out, you learn from it. That happened to me. And I've been on an upswing ever since. I just keep getting happier and happier every day. And now, playing with Dave, I'm just ecstatic. It's the happiest I've ever been. And I thank God that I was able to start to really appreciate life, my friends, music. There's a lot of things I'd like to talk about and maybe some day I will. But right now, at


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this point in my career, I don't want to say certain things that might give people the wrong impression. Let's keep it positive."

Vai grew up in Long Island, where he came under the spell of guitar at age 13. It was Jimmy Page's solo on "Heartbreaker" that initially grabbed him. "I had never heard anybody play that fast," he recalls. "By today's standards it might not be one of the greatest guitar solos on record. But back then, for me, it meant a lot. Both the technique and the emotion involved in that particular solo really grabbed me. And even today I still love it."

He began playing at age 14 and soon came under the tutelage of Joe Satriani, who became a towering influence on the young guitarist. "I took lessons with him for three years and he was very good because he didn't tell me that I had to play like him or that I had to do things this way or that way. He explained why it was important for me to figure out things on my own."

Satriani was the guy who introduced Vai to the joys of wang bar. "He was one of the most musical people I ever met, and he did a lot of things with the bar that I watched and learned from." Satriani is also responsible for impressing on Vai the virtue of "big ears."

"He could listen to a record and tell you in words exactly what was going on harmonically—the chord changes, the voicings, intervals and everything. I saw him do that and I said, 'I gotta be able to do this. I want to be like this guy.'"

It wasn't long before Jimi Hendrix came along to make another lasting impression on Vai's psyche. "I think Hendrix influenced me more spiritually than anything else," he says. "His whole approach was so inspiring. Just his feel, spiritually, of what he was doing is what sent me. He was doing it instinctively, with no precedent or no other examples to copy. You never really heard anyone else who sounded anything like him. Whereas, if you hear someone like me you might say, 'Well, he sounds a little bit like this guy or that guy.' But Hendrix, man, he must've been from Venus or something."

Upon enrolling in the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Vai began studying theory with trumpeter Mike Metheny (Pat's brother) and trumpeter Wes Hensel, who taught him a lot about writing for woodwinds. It was at Berklee that Vai learned to sight-read.

"Oh God, what a task! I think the guitar is one of the hardest instruments to sight-read on. But one summer I was determined to learn. I said, 'This does it! I am gonna sit here all summer and become a great sight-reader.' I went to the library and got so many books—violin books, saxophone books, flute books, everything. And lemme tell ya, it was hard. But it paid off."

Vai spent a lot of time transcribing Frank Zappa music during his term at Berklee. Later, when he joined Frank's

outfit, he would put in even more time in transcribing. "I was literally working 10 hours a day doing nothing but transcribing," he recalls. "All day, every day. I was transcribing guitar solos, lead sheets, orchestra parts. There's a stack of stuff at my house that's four feet high. There's a book of guitar parts and drum parts from Frank's music that's four inches thick. So when I was with him, I was working on Frank's music all day, every day, whether I was learning it on the guitar, practicing or transcribing it. That's all I did. That's why I got along great with Frank. I was very dedicated to his music. It's what he needs out of his employees.

"And through all the transcribing, it's made it possible for me to hear things and visualize them on my instrument better and see them on paper better. Now I can look at a piece of music and pretty much have an idea of what it's going to sound like, just by looking at it. Or if I get an idea for a melody line, I can instantly commit it to paper, just like I'm writing a letter to somebody. It's not a hard thing to do. It's just a question of sitting down and doing

"No one else sounded like Hendrix," says Vai. "He must've been from Venus or something."

it and being disciplined about it. I learned that much from Frank."

Vai has particularly high regard for Zappa's perfectionist tendencies. It's one of the things that rubbed off on Vai during his three-year period with ol' FZ. Listen to Vai's self-produced album, *Flex-able*, to hear what else rubbed off on him.

Says Vai of the maestro, "Frank Zappa is a very dedicated musician. He's very, very demanding of himself, moreso than anybody I've ever seen in any medium at all. And that comes through in both the quantity and the quality of the music he produces. For me, it's music of the highest quality. I love Frank's music. And being able to watch him create that music is a real thrill in itself. It makes you think,

continued on page 120



BILLY SHEEHAN

BASS FROM OUTER SPACE

Billy Sheehan was recognized throughout the guitar world but unknown by the world at large when we first interviewed him in early '84. Many had *heard* about him but few had actually heard him play. But today, after struggling for more than 15 years in Talas, Sheehan has finally broken through nationally. *Eat 'Em And Smile*, David Lee Roth's debut post-Van Halen album, is Sheehan's *first* major-label release.

"I immediately jumped when Dave offered me the gig," says Billy. "Even though Talas got signed and I was offered a solo deal before I was approached by Dave, I went with Dave because I was tired of trying to make an unknown band happen. Fortunately, because of the type of player I am, Dave knew I would be the right choice for the gig."

Dave knew that in order to follow up a band as momentous as Van Halen, he would need cream-of-the-crop players to do it. Sheehan and Vai to the rescue. Though Sheehan was nationally unknown prior to 1980—the year Talas toured with Van Halen for 30 dates—that tour proved to be an important stepping-stone for Billy Sheehan. Not only did Roth get to witness what Sheehan was capable of doing on the bass, word of mouth quickly spread about this virtuoso bassist from Buffalo with the unorthodox playing style.

The press was the first to get hip to Sheehan. "A lot of journalists have been very supportive of me," says Billy. "It's because the press is made up by people who are better evaluators of ability than record company or radio people. My press kit is currently about two inches thick. By the end of this tour you'll need to carry it around in a box [*laughs*]. The press has definitely been my biggest friend in helping me get successful.

"On the other hand, the major record companies have always been unsupportive in the past. In Talas, we've been promised things that we never got, we've been lied to, ripped off—you name it. When Talas was a three-piece, Ed Van Halen used to always tell me what was wrong with the band and offer suggestions on what to do to improve it. He said we needed a frontman like David Lee Roth, someone who could take over and be the entertainer. I tried to get one but couldn't. Now that I'm working with Dave, I understand what Ed meant."

Who would have thought, just two years ago, that Billy Sheehan, the once-crowned "Eddie Van Halen of Bass," would wind up in a band with David Lee Roth. "Actually," says Billy, "Dave and Ed wanted me to join Van Halen years ago, but Alex [Van Halen] didn't want me to. Alex said I overplayed too much, and he was quite content playing with Michael [Anthony]. Whenever I would walk into Van Halen's dressing room, I would immediately get a bad vibe from Alex—the guy didn't like me.

"As for all the bad things that the Van Halen band has been saying about Dave," continues Billy, "it's a total waste of energy and

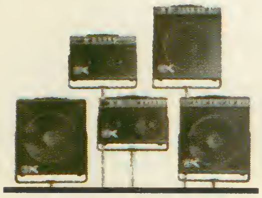
BY JOE LALAINA

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A Billy Sheehan Axology

The bass I played on the David Lee Roth videos is a custom-built Yamaha BB3000S, but on tour I've been using my old 1969 Fender bass with a Telecaster neck. I've played the Fender for just about every gig I've ever done, which is about 3000 gigs! It's the first bass I ever bought; I've been playing it for 17 years. I'm so accustomed to playing that one instrument that when I go to a NAMM [National Association of Music Merchants] show and pick up a bass, I don't feel comfortable playing it since I'm so used to playing the Fender. The only original parts on it are the body, some of the pickguard and some of the ground wire—everything else has been changed.

The Yamaha BB3000S is set up in a very similar fashion to the Fender bass. What Yamaha did was that they eliminated the shortcomings of the Fender bass—for example, the radius of the neck is a bit too big, so they flattened the neck on the Yamaha—and they took all the good points and enforced them. At the moment, the pickup configuration on the Yamaha is the same as the Fender: It's got a Gibson EBO-style pickup in the neck position and an old DiMarzio Model P-style pickup in the middle position. Each pickup is wired separately, so there's two jacks on each bass.

Although I'm happy with how the Yamaha bass turned out, the reason I've been using my old Fender bass is because it's like a wife to me. I do have a new girlfriend on the side, but I'm not ready to get divorced yet [*laughs*]. I use the Yamaha as a backup, so every night it's on the stage and ready to go. The reason I don't use the Yamaha as my main bass is because I still need time to tweak it out.

As for my amp set-up, it's hard to describe how it works. Let it suffice to say that I use three sounds: low, clean and distortion. When the distortion amp is turned off, I have a totally clean sound. And when the distortion amp is turned on, it sounds like a bass player, a rhythm guitar player and a lead guitar player mixed into one. If I were to describe it any further, I would have to explain the cross-over frequencies and it would be a mess. My amp set-up enables me to play fast and still have my sound be readable enough to hear all the notes. Basically, it's a bi-amp system, but instead of being crossed over with a cross-over, it's crossed over with pickups that work at different frequencies. Each bass guitar has a separate volume and tone control for each pickup and each pickup is fed through different amplifiers.

The secret of the sound is due to the separate amps and the quality of the distortion, which comes from a Pearce G-1 preamp. I spent so much money just trying to find a preamp that would distort properly with a bass guitar. I tried just about every preamp on the market. I even had five or six of them custom-made from scratch by engineers from L.A. to New York. Finally, after experimenting with different things, Dan Pearce of Buffalo customized one of his preamps for me and it worked great. Since 1981, I've been using Pearce preamps exclusively. I use them for everything—the low, the clean and the distortion.

What my amp set-up basically does is it makes my bass sound like it sounds, or rather feel like it feels, when there's no amp. Whenever you plug a bass or a guitar into an amp, the instrument feels a lot different than it would if you were playing without an amp. As elaborate as my amp set-up is, its main purpose is to duplicate what the instrument feels like when I'm sitting in a hotel bathroom—a good place to play because of the ceramic tiles—and just playing bass.

Onstage, I'm currently using 16 JBL 2225 speakers for my low and clean sounds and eight JBL E130's for my distortion sound. All the speakers are powered by six Yamaha PC-2002 power amps.

I use Rotosound standard gauge Swing Bass strings. I've been using Rotosound strings since way back in 1971, the year I started playing live. I tried their lighter-gauged strings, but they didn't feel comfortable since my hands weren't used to playing on them. If I make any changes in the near future, I'll add a heavier low E string to get a meatier sound out of it.

My sound comes totally from my hands. If another bassist were to go on the stage and pick up my bass, I don't think he would be able to play through my gear. I've had people use my gear and all that would happen would be that the bass would go out of control and start feeding back like crazy. My gear is custom-fitted to me, personally, so it doesn't work in another player's hands. What you're hearing is one hundred percent me.

—As told to Joe Lalaina

it's unnecessary. They've taken so many shots at Dave that it's beginning to reek of a psychological problem. It's like going out with a girl who always talks about her old boyfriend—after a while you don't want to hear it anymore. I mean, if you don't have anything good to say, you might as well not say anything at all. The guy they're talking about and the guy I'm working with are two different people. I've never had any problems with Dave."

What's it like working with him? "He's very demanding and insists that the people in his band contribute as much as he does. As long as you put out as much as him, he's your best friend and your best cheerleader. Whenever we're rehearsing or writing songs, he always encourages us. If I would say, 'Hey, Dave, is this bass part too busy?' He'd say, 'No, do it twice as fast and Steve, you double it.' He's the most non-restrictive person I've ever worked with; I have as much freedom now as I had in Talas. He hand-picked us to be in his band."

"Dave and Ed wanted me to join Van Halen years ago, but Alex didn't want me to."

Roth approached Sheehan first. "Dave and I started planning for the band on June 4th, 1985," says Billy, "the day before the start of the Talas/Yngwie Malmsteen tour. I was in Los Angeles, waiting for the first show at the Hollywood Palladium. When Dave and I sat down in his kitchen, he said he wanted to start *a band*. He said he didn't want to have a backup band and do just one album and one tour; he wanted to form a band that would stay together for a long time. He didn't want people who were just concerned about making money. I mean, I drove a '77 Pinto for five years.

"After the Talas/Yngwie tour ended in August, I immediately moved to L.A. and started to hunt down guitar players with Dave. Ironically, I had spoken to Steve Vai at the Rainbow [*a popular L.A. hangout*] the same night that I had first talked to Dave about starting a new band. I originally approached Steve in regards to a solo album that I was planning at the time, and asked him if he wanted to play on it. At the same time, I hinted to Steve and said there would be something coming up pretty soon that would be superhot, but I wouldn't tell him what it was. Then Dave met Steve at a later date and the rest is history."

When talk first spread that Roth had enlisted Sheehan and Vai into his band, many anxiously wondered what the group would be like. Would Roth's presence give the band a distinct Van Halen-like sound? Would Vai's flashy, avant-garde style give it a fusiony feel? Or would Sheehan's hands-all-over-the-place bass give the band a bottom-heavy sound reminiscent of his work in Talas? Judging from the *Eat 'Em And Smile* album and tour, the overall sound is quite balanced—each player's style is suitably showcased within the context of the band.

"My bass parts stood out in Talas because no one else was domineering," says Billy. "I got a reputation for being a total hog and an egomaniac because of it. I did everything and provided for everyone in the band. I carried a lot of weight on my shoulders. Now I'm glad to be playing with people who carry as much weight as I do, if not more.

"In many ways, this band is what I wanted Talas to be like. I wanted to have a frontman who could take over and a guitarist who could be just as forceful. The most magical things always happen when I'm locked in with the other players. This is the first time I've ever been in a band



Billy Sheehan bends back the "G" on his souped-up Yamaha BB3000S bass.

where I'm both philosophically and musically aligned with everyone else."

Although Sheehan and Vai are each capable of ridiculous overplaying, they play off one another surprisingly well. "Since we're both on the same wavelength," says Billy, "our instincts go the same way. We may run different roads when we do things together, but we both wind up at the same house. Steve and I have the same rock influences—we're both big Hendrix and Zappa fans. I got my first Frank Zappa album, *Freak Out*, when I was in the seventh grade. Since then, I bought just about every Zappa album that was ever released, including bootlegs.

"Steve's solos come from a totally different perspective from other guitarists. I'm a big guitar fan and I've worked with some very talented players—toured with Yngwie and Ed Van Halen, played with Tony MacAlpine and Michael Schenker—but Steve is different from all of them. His combination of the Zappa/Hendrix influence with his Berklee schooling has created one of the most unique styles I've heard. Although a lot of Steve's solos sound like he stumbled across them accidentally, everything he plays is on purpose. He can repeat any sound he gets over and over again. And Steve's a workaholic, so he's always writing songs."

In fact, Vai wrote the bulk of the original material on *Eat 'Em And Smile*. Only one cut, "Shy Boy" (an old Talas standard), is a Sheehan composition. "I was in a period of transition when we were preparing to put the album together," says Billy, "so I didn't have any new material ready. I had just moved to L.A., and I was in a totally new band situation, so it took a while to adjust to all the changes. I'll probably have a lot more songs on the next album. By then, we'll have played together for a whole year, so we'll be able to work off one another better. I'm used to always writing *for* a band. This album really just scratched the surface on what Steve and I can do together."

Did Sheehan have trouble getting a good sound in the studio? "No, not at all," he says. "It's never tough because I'm so used to my gear. The thing that's been my greatest help is that I've played live so many times. I had to earn my living by entertaining people in bars and clubs. Therefore, my amp always had to be in perfect working order. If something went wrong, I had to know exactly what it was right there and then. I'm so used to being a super-roadie because I always had to be my own roadie.

"Now that I play arenas instead of clubs, I have to trim things to make my sound more audible. The bass is the most difficult instrument to reproduce proper-

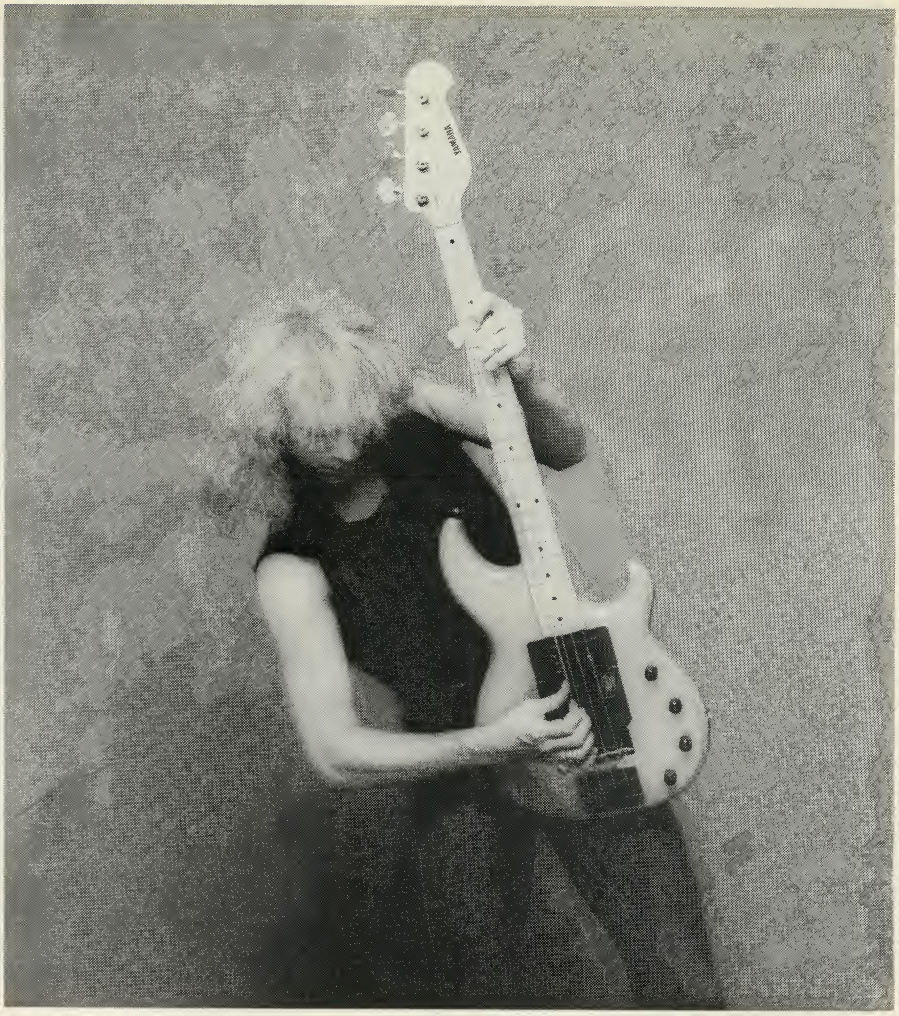
ly in a big hall. Because of the room reverberation, the first thing you lose definition on is the bass frequencies. Now I have to play things more articulately, and I have to concentrate more on what my fingers are playing instead of the blatant flailing that I used to do."

The songs from *Eat 'Em And Smile* come across with more vitality on stage than on record. "Live we go totally crazy," says Billy, "and play the songs differently than we did on the album. When you're recording, you have to be more careful—if you do too much the songs get too busy. Live you get more opportunity to fly around. Because there's no overdubs on stage, you have more space to fill. In the studio, on the *Eat 'Em And Smile* stuff, I basically put down a foundation with just a little extra thrown in. Live, I put down a foundation and then lots of extra parts.

"The Van Halen songs that we do in concert are also changed around a bit. Rather than hold an E note for the whole song, I let the E ring while I move around on the other strings to give the song more motion. Steve also appreciates it because it allows him to play his parts differently from the way Ed Van Halen played them. I'm real happy with how the Van Halen songs come across on stage."

When Sheehan was in Talas, the highlight of the show was Billy's bass solo. Now, instead of playing an unaccompanied solo onstage, Sheehan trades off with Vai for a wicked bass-guitar war. "We needed to come up with something that would entertain everyone," says Billy. "At the start of the tour, I did my solo the same way I always did it; and Steve did his own solo, too. Although the musicians in the crowd may have loved it, I'm sure a lot of the other people were yawning. In an auditorium, where much of the crowd is far from the stage, you have to do something special to keep everyone interested. So Pete Angelus [*Roth's manager*] suggested that we do a guitar duel—and it's a riot. It's an effective way to get people who are not musicians to understand musicianship, which to me is very valuable. Many people fail to realize that the real purpose of being able to perform in front of an audience is that you should be able to *entertain* people. Even the most esoteric jazz artist should be able to present his music in a way which will appeal to as many people as possible."

What gives the David Lee Roth band an edge over most arena acts is the audience it attracts—a disparate mixture of I-wanna-meet Dave starlets and musician-types. "Dave makes Steve and I appealing to the people in the crowd who don't even know the difference between a guitar and a bass," says Billy. "Not only do lots of musicians come to the show—which I always had in Talas—we attract everyone from preppie girls to total metalheads. While everyone gets to see Dave do his thing, the crowd gets some musicianship at the same time.



"In Talas, I played to lots of musicians. And you can tell who they are—they're usually the ones who stand in front of the stage with their arms crossed and look at you like, 'Oh yeah, I bet I can do that.' It's intimidating at first, because if you don't impress them they'd be upset and ask for their money back. I got so used to playing for musicians, that it got to a point where I actually enjoyed it. As soon as I'd see people in the crowd with their arms crossed, I'd pull every trick I knew out of every bag I had. After a while, their arms would eventually uncross and by the end of the show they'd be cheering with the rest of the crowd."

Word has it that Vai will be doing a solo album after the Roth tour. Sheehan's solo project, however, has been tentatively shelved. "Steve already committed to do one before he joined the band," says Billy. "I'm looking forward to doing the next David Lee Roth album first. The main reason I wanted to do a solo album for so long was because I was so frustrated in Talas."

Just prior to joining Roth's band, Sheehan had hooked up a solo deal with Gold Mountain Records. "I just got out of it," he says, "and I'm glad I did. I had some problems with them, so I asked for a release. After months of asking and asking, they finally gave it to me. I felt they weren't as interested in putting in as much as they were interested in getting out. I hadn't even begun to do anything with them, and I did a record with someone else, and they were asking for points off the record!"

The album Sheehan refers to is Tony MacAlpine's *Edge Of Insanity*. According to Sheehan, "It's one of my all-time favorite albums. Every cut is composed like a theme to a chase scene in an incredible movie. Plus, Tony's an amazing player; each solo he plays is like a piece in itself. I didn't go off the edge as much as I usually do because I was so fascinated by the music that I didn't want to get in the way."

One thing Sheehan says definitely gets in the way of music is drugs. "I know 19-year-olds whose bodies are literally falling apart from too much partying," says the 33-year-old bassist. "I don't even take aspirin. I have only two vices: drinking beer and always wanting to have lots of ladies around. This is the We Love Women tour. Women are why I became a musician. When I saw the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan Show and saw how every girl in the audience went crazy, I immediately knew what I wanted to do for a living. Fortunately, after that, I got a chance to discover an instrument."

A self-taught player, Sheehan has been playing bass for 20 years. "When I first

One thing Sheehan says gets in the way of music is drugs. "I don't even take aspirin."

started playing," says Billy, "I never felt that I needed to learn how to read music. Over the years I developed my own style of doing things, but I learned soloing *after* I learned how to play fundamentally. These days, a lot of people are picking up a guitar and doing hammer-ons before they can play a C chord. A lot of guitarists, for example, can solo their asses off but can't even lay down a solid rhythm if they tried. Solidity is one of the most important qualities any guitarist or bassist should have.

"I recommend that all aspiring bassists should first learn as much as they can about playing fundamentally. If they're into heavy metal, they should listen to the bassists in Judas Priest and AC/DC. Although most people don't even know their names, they're both good, solid players.

"Then you take a player like Jeff Berlin. If you listen to his records you'll realize that he's taken the bass just about as far as you can go with it. He's probably the best overall bassist because he can read and play anything. Jeff can play styles of music that most people have never even heard of, including myself. Like Steve Vai, Jeff's musical knowledge is endless. I mean, Jeff and Steve can pick up a piece of paper with musical notes smeared all over it and sight-read it. I would never be able to do that. I should get a beginner's book and start learning how to read music [*laughs*].

"I'm much more of a pattern player than a note or a scale player," adds Billy. "Everything I play is a combination of three patterns: two whole steps on the same string; a whole step and a half-step on the same string; and a half-step and a whole step on the same string. Since I've practiced every possible configuration of those three patterns, my hands have become like a machine. When I'm playing, I don't think about anything other than letting my hands go where they're supposed to go."

When not touring or recording, Sheehan does seminars at the Musicians Institute in California. "I sit down with all the bass players and answer questions. Although a lot of the teachers there concentrate on theory, what they usually never talk about is how to get the best sound from your amp, string adjustments, finger movement, pickup configurations and stuff like that."

Sheehan has already proved to be one of rock's most innovative bassists. What's his next step? "I would like to help as many young players as possible by steering them in the right direction, even if it's by telling them to stay away from drug and alcohol abuse. I'd love to let people know what I know. I had to do everything myself, so I know what it's like to be a struggling musician. If I would have gotten some help and encouragement, I could have gone a lot farther a lot faster.

"In Talas, I always pushed as hard as I could. Some nights I had to play for less than a hundred people, but I still gave it my all every single night. Often, people would speak to me before a show and tell me that they had read articles about me and that they were looking forward to see me perform.

"It took 16 years of grinding to get to where I am today. Everything I now have comes from the people who have seen me play and the journalists who have supported me. I should establish some new goals pretty soon because all my dreams have already come true during the past year."



This Guitar Player Is Wild!

. . . and definitely crazy, by his own admission. But watching VINNIE VINCENT play, you get the feeling that wild and crazy is just another definition for great showmanship.

By Bob Grossweiner

Vinnie Vincent, the one-time lead guitarist for Kiss, is in love with himself, guitars and women, although in no particular order. Like one of his early guitar heroes, Jimi Hendrix, the 31-year-old Vincent sleeps with his guitar, which he claims gets his many girlfriends jealous. "They get pissed off that I like to take my guitar to bed with me," he says matter-of-factly, "but some say, 'If you got to have it, then you *got* to have it.' "

In talking to Vincent for any length of time, one will inevitably hear expressions like "sleeping with girls" and "looking for girls." In fact, like Hendrix, Vincent has a compulsion that he has to record an album with many good-looking females in the control room. "I tried to get girls to audition for my road crew by getting them to come to the studio while I was recording," he says, admitting he used a scam to get them there. "There were always five to six girls sitting around every day."

The Brooklyn native, whose real name is Vinnie Cusano, played on Laura Nyro's *Nested,* Dan Hartman's *Instant Replay* and Felix Cavaliere's recent albums before getting the call to replace Ace Frehley for 80 percent of the leads on Kiss' *Creatures Of The Night* while Frehley was recovering from an automobile accident. Although not credited on the album cover (apparently, recent pressings do acknowledge Vincent's ax playing), he was fully credited on the follow-up *Lick It Up.*

Before officially joining Kiss, "I was sleeping in a lot of girls' houses trying to make it," he reminisces. "I was living from one girl to another girl. They were kind enough to support me. I made a lot of demos and Gene Simmons heard one, and I started writing with him—'I Love It Loud' and 'Killer' from *Creatures.*"

According to Paul Stanley, there were some similarities between Frehley and Vincent, especially in their chord voicings. But solo-wise, Stanley and Simmons agree that Vincent was a lot more fluid and

quicker—a must for Kiss at the time.

However, at the end of the *Lick It Up* tour, Vincent left the group. According to band members, Vincent was let go at the end of the tour because he wanted more say than the band members were willing to provide, and Vincent felt he should become an equal member equity-wise. Stanley particularly felt that Vincent would be best off as his own bandleader. (Kiss found Mark St. John and then Bruce Kulick to fill the lead guitar spot.)

The Vinnie Vincent debut album, *Invasion*, has recently been released on Chrysalis Records. The guitarist says it's the first of an eight-album, four-million-dollar record deal. "The record is true to myself and my fans," he feels. "I can stand behind it. I couldn't stand behind the Kiss records.

"Kiss was too conservative with guitarists," states Vincent. "At the end of the *Lick It Up* tour, I was very unhappy and knew it wasn't what I wanted. They were holding me back, guitar-playing-wise. To me, the art is all that counts. Without the art, the fame and money doesn't mean anything. I was looking for a home, and it was a home for me if I wanted to play it *their* way. It was, 'Do as you're told. This is what you're going to play and this is how much notoriety you're going to get and nothing else.'

"I wasn't able to play the guitar the way I like to play the guitar," he continues. "I was lying to myself. I was lying to the fans, and it was not fair to the group. I was really a problem child. I was a rebel. After two-and-a-half years, I knew it was never going to be any better for me. I was never going to be able to show my fans the magnitude of the real Vinnie Vincent. It was a painful decision to leave—it was not very easy to do.

"I actually left the band twice. First before the American *Lick It Up* tour, and then six months after the tour ended. Gene said we were going to get together to present new songs for the next album. I went into the studio and had the time of my life demoing my songs. It sounded so great and so outrageous that I knew who Vinnie Vincent really was. Although it excited me, it was fate's way of telling me to leave. But I'm eternally grateful to Kiss because they changed my life forever. There were a lot of hard feelings. There was a bad scene because I literally walked out on them. I was emotionally distraught: How could I have everything I wanted and still not do what I wanted to do. The pain was amazing!"

Vincent, though, took his time to put together a band, which seems a bit strange with the enthusiasm he generated with his demos. "The criterion for picking people in the band," he offers, "was that I wanted people whose talent I could respect. I wanted a killer band—the hottest players I could find. It took me a year to find them."

Robert Fleischman, who sang lead on



Journey's *Next* and recorded a solo album, was a longtime friend and obvious choice for lead vocalist. [*Editor's note: Fleischman has recently been replaced by Mark Slaughter.*] Vincent found bassist Dana Strum in a trashy lingerie store in Los Angeles selling garter belts and corsets to young girls. Having played bass with Ozzy Osbourne (when Randy Rhoads was in the group) and ghost-written with Osbourne, Strum was another sure-fire find. "He was a hot player in L.A. at the time," insists Vincent. "He teamed Jake E. Lee up with Ozzy. He was even called to help find a replacement for me in Kiss when I left the first time."

Vincent looked for a jazz-fusion drummer because "they beat the shit out of the drums but are sophisticated enough to play jazz. Rock drummers bore the shit out of me. Bobby Rock looks like a cross between Paul Stanley and Rambo."

On *Invasion*, Vincent advises people on the liner notes that the album was "made 2 B played at MAXIMUM VOLUME." The album starts off with some dazzling guitar feedback as an intro to "Boyz Are Gonna Rock," the only carry-over tune from Vincent's hot demo. The track defines the guitar-driven frenzy of the quartet with Vincent's searing solos. The album ends with an over-a-minute-long guitar siren, which symbolizes Vincent's desire to never have the album end. "I wanted it to go on and on so we made a loop of a spaceship landing," says Vincent.

Vincent went crazy in the studio. The most amps he had ever used before were two bottoms and two heads, but for *Invasion* he went for power with eight heads and 16 bottoms. "We got each head sizzling," he says with a smile. "Heads and cabinets caught fire. We had four 100-watt Marshall heads, all beefed up, in addition to some Carvin and Randall stacks. We used the feedback. In fact, we had to keep a fire extinguisher around at all times."

For the rhythm tracks, Vincent used his trusty 1981 pink Jackson Randy Rhoads prototype (he claims to have all three prototypes in existence) that he used with Kiss. "It's my favorite guitar," he notes. "I asked Grover to make me an outrageous guitar, the Vinnie Vincent model. I wanted a 3-D approach. It's real spacy-looking and modern. I wanted to futurize the Randy Rhoads model. Mine makes that look dated by comparison. There is a combination of my initials with one 'V' overlapping another 'V.' One pickup is a 'V' in hot pink, the other 'V' is silver metal flake."

The maple guitar with an ebony neck is, according to Vincent, "sonically correct. There's a full spectrum of highs and lows with enough mids. There's an overall sound of everything that I missed on my other guitar, the pink Jackson Randy

"I was very unhappy in Kiss. They were holding me back, guitar-playing-wise. I was looking for a home, but I didn't want to play it *their* way."

Rhoads Stratocaster. I kept the '81 EMG pickup, which I've always liked. A Jackson preamp is installed in the guitar, giving me even more overdrive. A mid-range control was installed in the guitar, giving me more mids. The guitar resonates just right.

"The guitar is me just as much as the album is me," exclaims Vincent about his new workhorse ax. "I play my own model. It's a thrill of a lifetime. Physically and visually, this guitar has it all."

In his guitar collection, Vincent has lots of treasured Jacksons, including six Randy Rhoads', a '59 Gibson doubleneck, a '52 Telecaster, a '62 Gibson and a Les Paul Sunburst.

He uses Ernie Ball strings (the .009 set) as well as Dean Markley and D'Adarrio. He uses no outboard gear or special effects on *Invasion;* live he uses a stereo splitter and a tape delay. He used to use Boogie tops but found that they didn't have an "authentic" sound, so he switched to Marshalls. He considers his picking style unorthodox because he uses the second and third fingers of his right hand in conjunction with his pick.

Since he cites Allan Holdsworth, Al Di Meola, John McLaughlin and Jeff Beck as his favorites, one has to wonder why Vincent plays heavy metal rather than fusion. "They're real players," he states, "much more than rock guitarists. I want to take the guitar to a higher realm.

"I enjoy playing heavy metal the most," he adds, "because it's the culmination of everything I've listened to. I'm an aggressive player. I'm a loud, extroverted person. I love my guitar—it's me.

"I'm never satisfied. I'm always striving to better myself. I had so much frustration in me from the Kiss days. I was a lunatic at the time, coming into a new recording deal and unleashing myself for the first time and being totally free. It blew my mind at the time.

"I was doing solos all by myself with music behind me. I had different performances I liked. One day, my guitar wasn't staying in tune, and I was so pissed off that I threw the guitar against the studio window, smashed the window and smashed the guitar. The neck and headstock fell off the guitar. Jackson guitars are made so well that I had to actually throw the guitar three times before it broke! I had to get all the frustration out of me. Then I lit the guitar on fire with lighter fluid and pissed on it to douse it. Then I felt a lot better. My favorite guitar was in pieces. I called my guitar tech—he wears a computerized watch so he can bill me from the time he leaves his house until he picks up the guitar. He repaired the guitar and charged me a fortune, about $800."

Months later, Vincent rationalizes, "It was out of tune on a hot humid day. It continuously screwed up with any performance I tried. I'm a perfectionist, and this was a culmination of my frustration."

Incredibly, Vincent's guitar was fixed a few days before the studio's windows were repaired, and he had to wait a few more days to work on his heavy metal *Invasion.*

clapton!

The great slow-handed one talks about his relationship with his workhorse guitar, "Blackie," and his attitude about jamming with some of the fastest guitar guns in the world, in this exclusive excerpt from a brand-new biography.

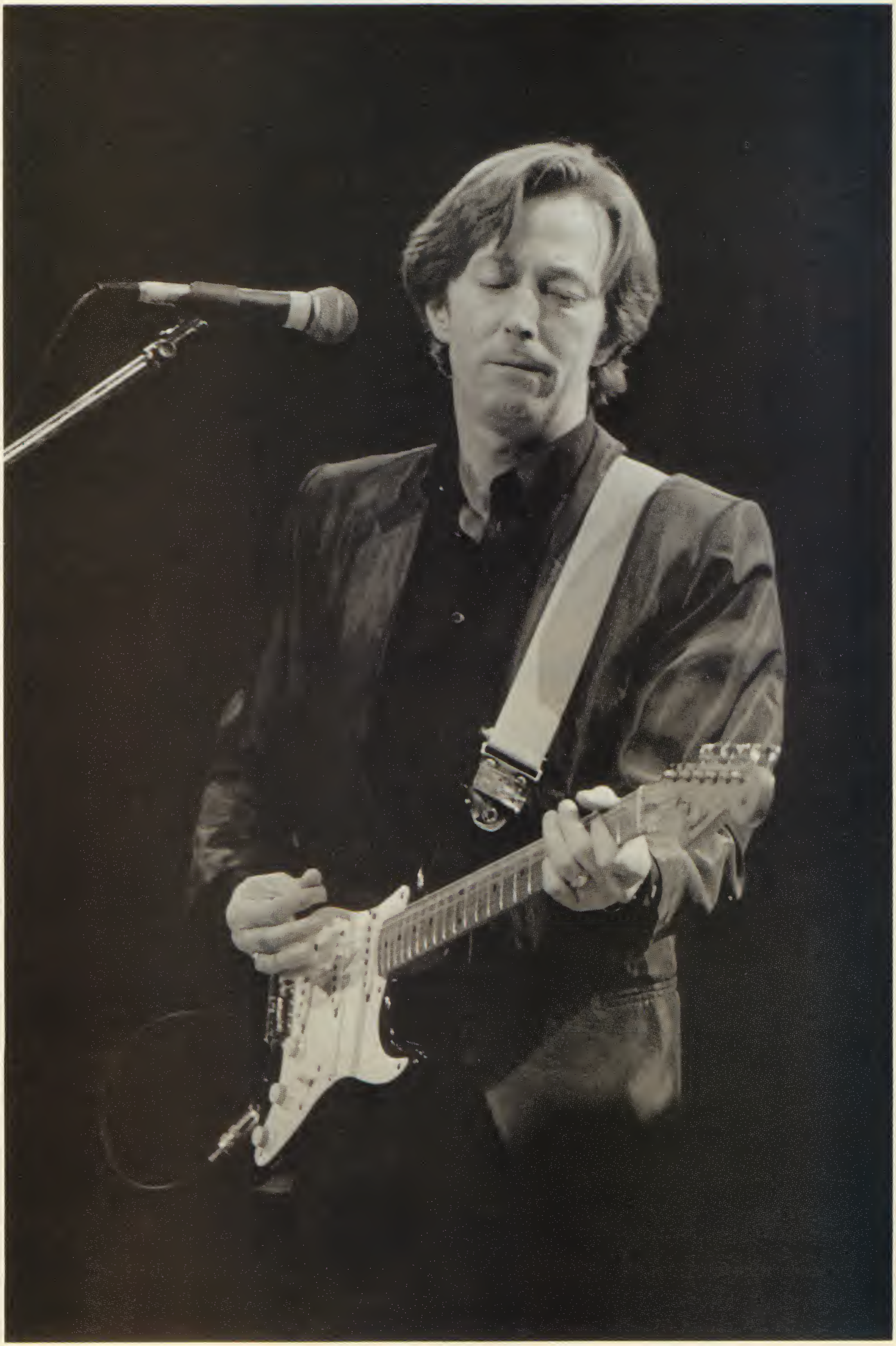
By Ray Coleman

At the last count, Eric Clapton owned a hundred and twenty guitars. They vary in style, shape and vintage and he says they are needed, although not in that luxurious quantity, for various roles. "A Spanish guitar for a classical melody or a Spanish sound, an acoustic for a country or folky or even a very old rural blues and an electric guitar, depending on the size or quality of the amplifier, if it's country, rock or blues. And my songwriting can be affected by the guitar that comes into my hand at the moment I'm composing."

Of all that mighty collection, an almost valueless guitar which he made himself occupies a special place as his favorite. Nicknamed Blackie, it is a 1956 black Fender Stratocaster, a hybrid actually assembled by Eric from six similar models which he bought for a mere hundred dollars each in Nashville in 1970. "It's very tough as a guitar, with a long, colorful history," says Eric. "I picked up these six Stratocasters at a time when the bottom had dropped out of the guitar market generally. Les Paul models were ruling the roost for guitar heroes, but I had a feeling about Stratocasters being somewhat sturdier. Buddy Holly had been a very big early influence, particularly the way he looked, and I loved the look and sound of his Strats. So I bought these six and came back to England with them. I gave one to Steve Winwood, one to Pete Townshend, one to George Harrison and I kept three. Out of the three I had left, I made one from the best ingredients of each guitar, right down to the machine heads or the volume control.

"That guitar has been with me through all kinds of scrapes. I remember in Jamaica, rehearsing the band I had for *461 Ocean Boulevard*, drunk out of my mind, in the middle of the night in this cinema which we'd rented. We could only get to play in it during the night from twelve o'clock to six o'clock in the morning. I remember ending a Chuck Berry number by falling flat on my face. That was the cue for the drum beat to end the song, and I crushed some parts of my Blackie guitar underneath me. And within half an hour it was playing as good as new, just with a few little running repairs. The body and the neck and everything else were totally gone and I thought: This guitar is my *life*. It can take as much damage as me! And I've never felt quite that secure with any other guitar. I can pick it up, drop it or bounce it off the wall and it will still be in tune and still play with heart and soul. It's irreplaceable."

This article has been reprinted with permission by the publishers from Clapton! An Authorized Biography *reprinted Copyright © 1985 by Ray Coleman (published by Warner Books, Inc., New York). Since the book's publication, Clapton has "retired" Blackie ("which is just about worn out"). He has replaced it with two Stratocasters, one red and one grey, built especially for Clapton by Dan Smith of Fender Instruments. Stay tuned for our long-awaited personal interview and cover story on Clapton.*



Paul Natkin/Photo Reserve

On stage, Eric changes guitars to suit a song's style.

"I switch sometimes because of tuning . . . because I use a few different tunings to play slide. But Blackie is the core guitar. Somehow, with that guitar, I can make sounds that are truly me. I can do my total thing, whereas if I use a Gibson, it will sound like a Gibson."

Understandably, Eric regards Blackie almost as one of his limbs. At the Montserrat recording studios where he was recording his 1985 album *Behind The Sun*, one of the occasional visitors was American musician Stephen Bishop, an old friend of Clapton, who had guested on Bishop's albums.

"After we'd recorded one song, Stephen, as an afterthought, went in to add some electric guitar. He went back into the studio, picked up my special guitar, and began playing it—very brutally.

"This felt, to me, as if someone had taken a dagger and plunged it into my arm and was twisting it. I screamed, ran into the studio and grabbed it off him. Really, it was that bad, a physical feeling, painful. I believe that guitar has got some of me in it. So to see someone else pick it up and abuse it was unbearable."

After Eric had stopped drinking, he went through a phase of wanting to change all his surroundings—and he planned to spray Blackie a lurid green. His guitar roadie, Lee Dickson, flatly refused to allow him to do it. Though Eric is the owner of the guitar, Lee is its custodian. He ensures that it is treated with enormous care. But on one fact Eric is adamant: it is rarely far from his side, and unlike most of his guitars, is kept at his home. "What's special about that guitar," says Eric, summing it up, "is that it came from a period in my life when I was so conscientious, and it's actually got that feeling in it. My attitude now is much more lax. I could pick up a guitar and if it worked, great, and if it didn't I'd put it down again. But the idea of taking three or four guitars and working on them meticulously, as I did, to get one perfect just isn't in me any more. I value Blackie for that, too."

It was remarkable that Pattie [Harrison Clapton] knew of Eric's work—it was because of her husband George's fascination with Cream. "In every way," says Pattie, "the Beatles were very exclusive, almost a royalty of the pop world, and we very rarely listened to other musicians' work. The Beatles were totally absorbed with what *they* were producing. So any other band had to be very special before the records were played in the house." But because George was interested in Cream, Pattie became familar with the *Fresh Cream* album; it was thus somewhat ironic that Clapton should be the man who fell in love with her, as she happened to know his work quite well.

She has distanced herself from his work

but fully understands the psychology of his stance as a musician. "The *Layla* album affected me deeply," she says now. "Just before I completely left George, my sister Jenny and I went for a holiday in Africa and as soon as I put the radio on in Mombasa, 'Layla' started playing. It struck me how incredible it was that this one particular tune had so much depth, and that it was written for me."

Asked if she sees Clapton's music as a true reflection of his personality, Pattie answers thoughtfully: "No, I see him as two separate people. He has a conscious mind working on a day-to-day basis and the other side is the unconscious mind of the artist, with the ability to tap into a different side of himself in the same way that anyone does when they dream. The unconscious mind has a universal consciousness and a natural insight and knowledge, and Eric as an artist can connect with that.

"His day-to-day living is on a conscious level. It's very different from the artistic side. His daily personality is not reflected in any of the songs he writes. And so it's very curious to me to be living with someone who, when he's sitting down quietly, has all sorts of fantastic melodies going through his mind. He taps into a very private source that eventually comes out."

When Eric Clapton talks about his music, words like honesty, commitment and reality crop up frequently. Twenty years on, he remains outwardly modest when discussing his work. Inwardly, he fully realized his status and his ability. "I now know I can usually achieve a certain standard for any gig, any recording session . . . the challenge is no longer not to fall below that standard but to do something that I know is special, different. *Better!*"

Clapton the guitar hero is difficult to separate from the swashbuckling, rugged image of Clapton the man; his individualistic playing and singing merge with his enigmatic personality to present an aura that is elusive and therefore fascinatingly attractive to the millions who have watched his career grow.

Yet his fans' image of him often eclipses their perception of exactly what has made him a guitar star: his talent and unswerving dedication to his roots in the blues. Eric long ago understood the need to separate the image of the musician on stage and in the studio from his own image of himself beyond those confines, but it has probably contributed to another kind of identity crisis. In his mind now, he is a musician first and foremost—and a star secondarily.

He accepts, though, that many people's view of him reverses that order. "I fall for the same thing," says Eric. "What they base that on is very much a wild West gunslinger image. And that appeals to me as well. The crisis comes when I find that I'm *not* the fastest—or that, in fact, that *isn't* the important part. When the crisis comes, you have to sit down and think about it seriously—if your music is suffering because of how potent your image is.

"You just have to stop. It's like doing anything over and over again. It becomes meaningless, just repetition, until you deliberately make yourself stop because you're fed up and it's making you depressed. You go away from it, have a breather and come back. I find that if I ban myself from playing guitar for about a week—and that's the longest I think I could ever do it—when I pick it up again, I have an idea. I've gone to the guitar *because* I've had an idea, a line or a riff. But I don't do that when I start playing . . . I do something completely different that I had no idea I was going to do. Something inside that is uncontrolled wishes to express itself, and that's where I begin.

"The lengthy guitar solos and the improvisation in Cream may have been a stepping-stone for a lot of the heavy metal things that happened."

"Then, of course, the minute you start to polish it and hone it and look at it too much, it's gone again. I need to stop and let the thing express itself without controlling it. It's all that outside influence and self-conscious approach to playing that actually ends up destroying it."

He says he often surprises himself with something he plays: "It usually is when you've made a mistake or you're not concentrating or when you're just having too much fun. You try something or you just go to the wrong fret, and you suddenly are doing something that you didn't want to do. But you like it. Then you try to repeat it. And you get back into that polishing syndrome again, and it will become boring. It's usually when you're making mistakes that you find out there are other places to go that you hadn't planned out."

He views himself and members of his current band as, "musically speaking, American." Says Eric: "I can see that much better, in some ways, than Americans can because I'm in England looking at it from a distance. I have a lot of inbred stuff that I heard as a kid which I wouldn't have heard in America. English folk music is very much in the back of my head, subconsciously. So I suppose that comes out every now and then in terms of meter and length." Perhaps, he muses, American audiences needed to hear what he is doing coming from a Briton: "Although it's identical to what's been going on for a long time in their own backyard!"

The 1960s and 1970s were years of jamming. Those were the halcyon, adventurous days for the guitar heroes, when Clapton often took the stage alongside such contemporaries as Jeff Beck, Freddie King and Carlos Santana. Long before the synthesizer changed the sound of mass-appeal popular music for a new generation of fans, audiences and musicians alike enjoyed the interaction of jam-sessions. The players were in no doubt that the events were truly competitive.

Eric says he doesn't get into jamming situations so much these days, but when he does, that competitive element "*has* to be there.

"There is a way of approaching it," he says. "There's always a loudmouth in these situations, just like in samurai films. In *The Seven Samurai*, the best swordsman of all gets into a situation where he *doesn't* want to fight but he's up against this real bull of a man who's saying *he's* the best. The samurai finally says: 'No, I won. But if you insist, you can *say* that you won.' " And Clapton says that's precisely what he has always done.

"I let the loudmouth, or the villain, mouth off, get it all out of the way, and then I just come in very quietly, like B.B. King would, I imagine. Just one note or something that will shut *everyone* up, if I can find it! It doesn't always work." But Eric concedes that he sometimes has been eclipsed on stage in these competitive jams, by people he expected to rise above playing immature games. "Every time, it's been very healthy as well as very heartbreaking. When it's done to you by someone you really hero-worship, the first thing you feel is real betrayal. The bottom line of all these relationships should be a *colleague* feeling, and if that is taken away, you really feel painful. At the same time, it teaches you to grow up and become self-reliant."

Conversely, Clapton has sometimes been aware of his triumphs over people who have joined him on stage, and his success has not always been due to his musical output: "There have been times when I've played with, for instance, B.B. King or Freddie King, and the main contingent in the audience were my followers. They hadn't *heard* of Freddie King, so it was possible for me to win in that situa

tion just by being me, even if what I played wasn't better. You have to be aware of that and not allow it to happen."

It's hard, he says, to carry over the role of being the focal point of a stage show when he has wider responsibilities as a bandleader. "As a sideman, until the point when you come in for a solo, there's been no light on you, so you come in absolutely fresh. And that's your big moment. Whereas when you're in front all the time and singing one of your songs, it's all you; so when you play the solo, it's still you! There are no dynamics to it, and that can be a bit tough sometimes.

"So I think of devices, of ways of playing the solo, to make it more interesting. I went through a period of trying to minimize everything, taking shorter solos, and that was very badly received. My idea at the time was that by minimizing my solos, I would make it more potent, but I didn't succeed at that. The audience was right in many ways. I was trying to look at it like I was B.B. King or J.J. Cale, but B.B. is B.B., and I'm me. It's no good adopting someone else's personality or philosophy."

Eric is sparing in his praise of other musicians, a trait which makes his nominations as his favorites particularly significant. He thinks long and hard before naming the people who have been special to him. "Of all the people I've ever played with, the most stimulating in an onstage situation was Freddie King, closely followed by Carlos Santana. Because in both those situations we had time to get to know one another, to know when to stop and let the other one play, or when to push or not to push."

On non-guitarists who have been important to him, Eric says: "Steve Winwood is very high on the list. Also harmonica players like the guy who used to play with Muddy Waters [Jerry Portnoy]. Saxophone players, too: I once worked with King Curtis, and that was frighteningly good, something I wanted to repeat forever. He had exactly the same idea about what lines to play as I did. It was like another instrument with the same person playing it."

Accepting the fact that he has become a model for a new generation of rock and blues guitarists, Clapton seems amused. "The funny thing is, the parts that I recognize as having been taken directly from my playing are the parts about my playing that I don't like! Funnily enough, what I like about my playing are still the parts that I copied. If I'm building a solo, I'll start with a line that I know is definitely a Freddie King line and then, though I'm not saying this happens consciously, I'll go on to a B.B. King line. I'll do something to joint them up, so that part will be me. And those are the parts I recognize when I hear something on the radio: 'That sounds like me.' Of course, it's not my favorite part. *My* favorite bits are still the B.B. King or Freddie King lines."

Like all the great musicians whose work transcends mere playing and breathes so much of their own souls into the music, such as the jazz giants John Coltrane and Miles Davis, Clapton is more than a virtuoso guitarist. Beyond his masterly technique comes the inner force of the man's emotional complexity. And while his personality may be far removed from those of the narcissistic rock stars who dominate the top ten, he shrewdly recognizes the star-building imagery and machinery that attends every young musician.

He recalls that when he began copying the "feel," the "atmosphere," of the musicians who inspired him (B.B. King, Otis Rush, Blind Blake, Robert Johnson, Buddy Guy, Muddy Waters), he even pictured the kind of lifestyles they had and embroidered his mind around the pictures he visualized. "I'd picture what kind of car the musician drove, what kind of smell it had inside. Me and Jeff Beck had this ideal of one day owning a black Cadillac or a black Stingray that smelled of sex inside and had tinted windows and a great sound system. That's how I visualized these players living. That's what *feel* is all about. If I wanted to emulate somebody, I would try to picture what they would live like and try to live that way. You develop this kind of image, and even if your image isn't accurate, it helps you to get *somewhere*."

"The parts I recognize that people have taken from my playing are the parts about my playing that I don't like!"

On the theory that Cream and, by implication, the Clapton of the Cream years can now be seen as the founding fathers of the enduring heavy metal avalanche that built up during the 1970s and still sustains its momentum, Eric is guarded:

"It never occurred to me until this year," he said in 1985. "I always assumed that Zeppelin was the beginner of heavy metal. I think you could say there was a concept in Cream that was picked up on, more than the actual music. It's probably the lengthy guitar solos and the improvisation. That may have been a stepping-stone for a lot of the heavy metal things that happened."

But he does not believe that the "faster is better" theory of some younger players is necessarily the best. "It's not the way I would approach it, but it's hard to form a judgment on it when you don't know how it will turn out in the end. It may be that they're developing a whole new frame of reference. What may happen from this is a kind of rebellion in five or ten years' time that may take it back to where we recognize it. Or it may just become brand-new."

He is at pains to emphasize that he does not frown on today's heavy metal league, but he makes the point that it isn't his groove. "If Eddie Van Halen likes the way I play, then assumedly he must like what I liked. I've heard that he slowed down records of mine to learn the solos. That's dedication! I don't know quite how to respond to that. But if he can recognize where I'm coming from and still do what he does, then we have to accept that he's onto something that we're not really clear about. Because he couldn't be doing what he does and recognize Robert Johnson without there being something valid going on. He *is* very fast, and to my ears, he kind of goes over the top. But that's because I'm a more simple player. Maybe I would play like that if I had the technique. But to me, technique isn't as important as personality and feel. I can hang out with a guitar player for a very short time, and I may get a feeling from him as a *player*, but I may not want to hang out with him.

"He may be dynamite, very aggressive and to-the-front, to the point where I think: 'I can't handle this more than twice a week.' Every night would be just too much, too demanding. Constantly having to prove yourself is not very relaxing: It frays your nerves. I always end up with people in my band who I can really get on with as people, and that's what they play like as well."

For an artist of his stature, it's astonishing to hear Eric talk so frequently about his idealism in making music. The split in his personality, and his requirements, are typified by the fact that he would just as happily be a sideman if his ego, as well as his satisfaction, could be equally served. "I'm still not absolutely sure about all this, but it feels to me like you can only really do exactly what you want when there is no pressure to be what you've become popular for. When I play a concert, there's so much pressure on me to do old things, new things, what the audience wants; and when you become successful, you've got to bow to that to a certain extent. That cuts off a lot of your creative energy; it's quite limiting."

Guitarists of Clapton's stature have often pondered the notion that when a performance is going particularly well, the instrument is virtually "playing itself,"

continued on page 112

IMPROVISATIONAL CONCEPTS OF THE MASTERS

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L.A.'s NEW BREED

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WARREN DeMARTINI
Ratt

Warren DeMartini never lets the cat out of the bag. His playing hits you immediately, but there is more to come, something in reserve. There is a grace of execution in his lines. And while he has the ability to pick fast and clean, he will add two-string pulls and single vibrato notes to break it up. And he's got that photogenic flash—like the snakeskin which covers his Jackson guitar, the effortless manner in which the guitar seems to hang about his neck. Soft-spoken, bright and enthusiastic, DeMartini stands well apart from his hordes of imitators. "I don't want to play everything I know because then you've got nothing left. It's like playing your whole hand. Nowadays, I hear a lot of players with incredible dexterity and technique, really clean. But within the first half of a song sometimes I hear pretty well the whole catalog."

Photos By Glen La Ferman
Text By Steven Rosen

L.A.'s NEW BREED



RICKY BURNSTONE
Carrera

German-born Ricky Burnstone (von Krenzer) is perhaps the least recognizable name within this group, but what he brings forth is a sense of melody—both in song composition and guitar execution—which all but escapes most in this genre. Drawing on the sensibility of Neal Schon, his main focus is on the song—the solo is thrown in almost as an afterthought. The myth of guitar hero holds no attraction for this European; the variety of sounds he produces with his circa 1976 Fender Stratocaster (completely stock save for bridge position Humbucker) is his passion. Ricky rarely listens to other players. In his native Germany he was all but isolated from the growing number of styles and soloists developing in America. "Playing a guitar is talking without words. If somebody can do that, someone should be able to read what kind of person you are. But if somebody is up there and he's not really himself, people will think, 'Hey, there's something wrong . . . I can't really get to that guy.' "

L.A.'s NEW BREED



AMIR DERAKH
Rough Cutt

His guitars are painted like fighter planes, his playing is highly calculated fancifulness. Above all, Rough Cutt's Amir Derakh *cares.* He goes for the unique and melodic passage over the instant flash approach. Derakh uses many effects textures and is an admirer of the multi-voiced chord (his Holdsworth influence) as part of the style. There are no hammer-ons in his playing and only when used appropriately does he think speed has its place. One of his main yardsticks in measuring the merits of a player is the tone he achieves. Another is an individual's finger vibrato, a technique he claims he worked long and hard on. "Most of the fast players can play faster than I can, but I don't care. I don't think that is really where it's at. That's too trendy. The people who are still here in 10 years will get the most respect."

L.A.'s NEW BREED



GEORGE LYNCH
Dokken

Dokken's Lynch is the most influential of these players on all the others in this section. Even Ratt's DeMartini admits that he listened to George in his formative years. Looking like some electric warrior, decked out in khakis and a camouflage-painted Kramer, Lynch holds his pick in what he describes as an "unorthodox" fashion. It is actually pointed back towards the pickup and the string is struck with the head rather than the point of the plectrum. George has a vigorous attack and powerful selection of notes, rather like his own personality. He no longer dwells on the whammy bar (after centering his playing on it for several years) and only recently (with the release of *Under Lock And Key*) has he seriously been recognized as a major contributor in the development of essential metal techniques. The message is, don't try to put Lynch in a bag: "I'm always changing and still working with my sound."

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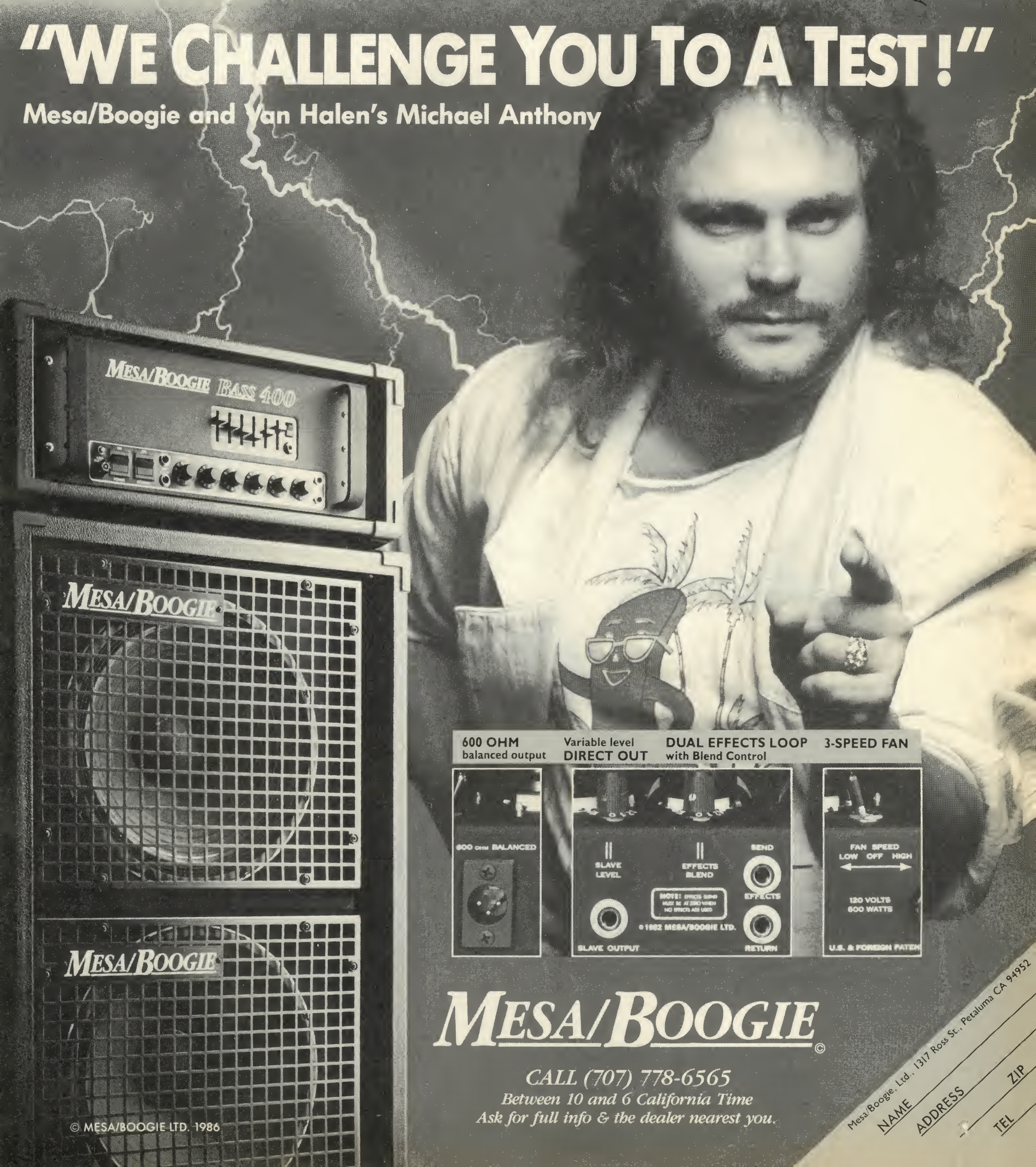
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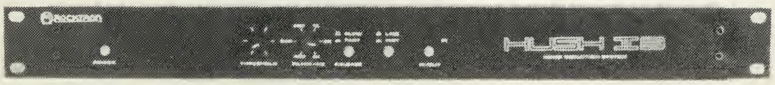
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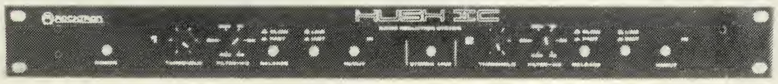


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CRAIG GOLDY
Dio

A refugee from the Rough Cutt and Giuffria camps, Goldy may well be the dark horse candidate in this group. Because of lack of money in his early San Diego days, he was forced to create effects with his hands rather than pedals. He can now produce a variety of sounds ranging from video games to ice cream trucks. Originally a painter and illustrator, he holds his pick exactly like a pencil and uses absolutely no wrist motion (save for chording) in his attack. On the next Dio album he plans to return to a less speedy approach—fewer notes—and hopes to set himself apart from the other fret-blazers in the business. "You have to play at a certain standard, but what I'd like to do is go back to some of the old stuff because that's where the roots are. I'd like to be a bit like Blackmore and Jeff Beck put together."



L.A.'s NEW BREED



PAUL GILBERT
Racer X

Paul Gilbert, a native of Greensburg, Pennsylvania, demonstrates an expansive technique, at times bordering on overkill, garnered from his days as student—and teacher—at the Musicians Institute (formerly G.I.T.). His B.C. Rich Mockingbird screams out sweeping arpeggios combined with right-hand tapping. The performance is an impressive example of modern-day guitar methodology—very fast. Gilbert took top gun honors in KLOS' "Guitar Wars" contest. He cites Ted Nugent, Jimmy Page, Billy Sheehan and Edward Van Halen as past and present stylistic influences but leans more towards the Gary Moore/Angus Young school of aggressive guitar tone and humbucking pickups wired in parallel. "Before Van Halen, I thought you couldn't get any hotter than Jimmy Page. And then somebody comes along and expands all the boundaries and you think, 'Why didn't I think of that?' And hopefully I will."

L.A.'s NEW BREED

Terrible Ted Rates The Players

If there's one thing TED NUGENT likes more than playing guitar, it's talking. Just listen to this . . .

By Bob Grossweiner

Ted Nugent is the first to admit that his career has had its ups and downs since the turn of the decade, which he attributes to poor management and overexposure. So the Nuge started to manage himself and switched record labels and booking agencies to get his career back on track. And while he was recording his most recent album, *Little Miss Dangerous*, he got a call from Bill Conti to work on the sci-fi movie *Nomads* starring Pierce Brosnan, Lesley Ann Downe and Adam Ant.

Nugent is obviously more animated than the movie, which never caught on with the public—the soundtrack album was never released. "The feedback, the dive bombers, the explosions, the rhythms, the aggressions—all the good things," he enthuses. "It elevated me, inflated my feedback—it was my typical bombastic approach. Conti boosted me. He has the computer mayhem. My inherent gut-level elements of 10 years of rock 'n' roll is on the score—the aggressive, the audacity, the sonic warfare elements."

The Motor City Madman has put his Les Paul Fusion, Gibson Byrdland and '59 Les Pauls to rest and is now exclusively using Paul Reed Smith Wonder guitars that he helped design—he even provided the maple from his Michigan property. "The instrument is magic," he says with a smile. "It sounds like a Black & Decker guitar. It has one of the finest tremolo systems in the world. I contoured the back to fit my body. It has a trim neck with width and depth and tall aggressive frets. It's a special guitar in the feel, touch, sound, dynamics and sonic dimensions."

Nugent plugs into Marshalls "with everything except volume at about a half up." He also has Fender amps with Celestion bottoms and JBL speakers, and a Sunn Penetrator amp (not marketed yet). He uses a stereo chorus and a little DDL for effects. Nugent also plays Guild and Fender basses.

Nugent lists James Brown and Wayne Cochran as his biggest influences for their groove, while also mentioning Lonnie Mack, Duane Eddy, Chuck Berry, Keith Richards, the Kinks (actually Jimmy Page's solos), the Yardbirds, Jimi Hendrix, Sun Ra and John Coltrane as influences.

"The caliber of guitar playing today," he says as a preface to the rating of the ax players, "is beyond scope. People accept an earth-shattering guitar solo as a good guitar solo. When Neal Schon does a solo at the end of a Journey song, it's acknowledged as a nice bridge when, in fact, he has come close to reversing the axis of the earth in doing such a brilliant guitar solo."

JIMMY PAGE: "Grossly overrated, a real fumble-finger, a guitar player who obviously aspired to be as colorful and lyrical as Jeff Beck but fell flat on his stoned face."

JEFF BECK: "An innovator—a master toucher and emoter of guitar fluidity."

JIMI HENDRIX: "A master craftsman, a pilot of an emotional roller coaster who came the closest to anyone in the history of the guitar to master the unlimited dimensions of the tonal and lyrical capabilities of the instrument."

ERIC CLAPTON: "The definitive reorganizational white blues guitarist."

MIKE BLOOMFIELD: "One of my biggest influences—an early assertive tone-conscious white adaptation to the blues masters with a very excitable and flamboyant flair for rhythm and blues-based rock 'n' roll."

EDDIE VAN HALEN: "A contemporary leader of the pack with as much impact as any individual guitar player who ever lived—an innovator when innovation seemed to be attacked, an inspiration to every guitar player who wants to take the lyrical interpretation of the instrument beyond its confines."

YNGWIE MALMSTEEN: "A sensational technician—an innovative adapter of classical Baroque into a rock 'n' roll contemporary flash."

GARY MOORE: "A deceptively-underrated guitarist, who has the widest range and repertoire of styles that I would like to hear more of. He's a sensational guitar player."

CARLOS CAVAZO: "An interesting, exciting guitarist who has some unique statements on the instrument which we don't hear from other people."

DAVE MENIKETTI: "A real traditionalist who has a lot of fire in his playing."

VIVIAN CAMPBELL: "He's a bit better than I thought; he was in a band that opened for me in Europe in 1977 when I did not think much of him. His recent work with Dio was upper-caliber stuff."

ANGUS YOUNG: "If you can separate the energy from the guitar, his guitar playing is one of the most exciting and well-constructed for his genre of any of the rock 'n' roll guitarists."

STEVE STEVENS: "A real exciting player."

MICHAEL SCHENKER: "A very lyrical, expressive player."

BRAD GILLIS: "A very exciting player who has drawn from all the obvious influences and orchestrated his playing very well."

RUDOLPH SCHENKER/MATTHIAS JABS: "Exciting guitar players—it's amazing that Germans can apply the American influences as well as they can."

RITCHIE BLACKMORE: "One of the originals who created his own style and nurtured it and maintained it through all these years and progressed with his style."

FERNANDO VON ARB: "A good player."

SAMMY HAGAR: "He has soul, plays a lot of traditional licks and hasn't gone the techno-extreme route. He plays a real palatable guitar style."

RONNIE MONTROSE: "One of the all-time greats who famously faded out of the scene and denied us the great pleasure of his guitar playing. I'd like to kick his ass so Ronnie would start eating some meat and come back and play like he means it."

BILLY GIBBONS: "My favorite guitar player in the whole world. He's got more soul than any black guitarist I've ever heard; he's got the definitive lyrical style. The great majority of his licks are real traditional, but he does them with such a style that they just drip—the quintessential stylist."

NEAL SCHON: "A brilliant guitarist—the best of rock 'n' roll, jazz, blues and an unknown original stylist. He's underrated; he's one of the most dextrous, fluid players around today. He accelerates Journey's music to the maximum every time. His best work is with Journey."

JAKE E. LEE: "He's very good, but a real standard player."

DUANE ALLMAN: "One of the greatest white blues players of all time. He made statements with his slide and statements with his tone. He was very lyrical."

PETE TOWNSHEND: "The ultimate rhythm guitarist. Every time he goes for a lead, I cringe, but every time he hits a chord, I refocus. He invented the power chords."

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN: "A great traditionalist with a flow for revitalizing blues and r&b. I love his style, but I don't see the correlation between him and Jimi Hendrix that everybody tries to make."

BRUCE KULICK (KISS): "He plays a great guitar; he's fast, controlled and real expressive."

ACE FREHLEY: "He was always so stoned that I couldn't decipher a lot of his playing, but the nights he shined, he shined fantastically."

KEITH RICHARDS: "The all-time slop master—the most grunting, groaning soulful blues-oriented guitarist who ever lived. He plays Chuck Berry music so much like Chuck Berry that he should get a Nobel Peace Prize. Keith is probably the single most influential guitarist I've ever heard."

RON WOOD: "I never thought much of him; he's just a shadow of Keith Richards."

JOHNNY WINTER: "The blues renaissance man of the seventies. I never cared for his shrilled tones, which are a bit too transparent for me, but he's technically proficient."

LESLIE WEST: "A great underrated guitarist who took the Clapton influence to its definitive end. The master of tone, the master of impact of a given note and an innovator of tones and feedback."

AL Di MEOLA: "An outrageous guitarist who has taken everything from Wes Montgomery to Eddie Van Halen and juxtaposed it all into a slew of styles which is difficult for me to translate but is nonetheless a competent and exciting player."

RICK NIELSEN: "The most fun guitarist in America. Very underrated, and he's got a great sensibility."

B.B. KING: "A spokesman for a generation of blues creationists who established the electric guitar for all of us to feed off. We owe him our heritage."

MICK JONES (FOREIGNER): "The 'Hot Blooded' guitar solo is the nastiest, most emotive guitar solo of all time. He is not really technically proficient but on occasion shows great sensibility in his playing."

MARK KNOPFLER: "He's wonderful—the only guy that dabbles in country that I can listen to."

KEITH SCOTT (BRYAN ADAMS): "A real stabber who plays a real simple, fluid style which is real pertinent to the compositions—well-constructed guitar work."

JIMMY McCARTY (DETROIT WHEELS): "One of my biggest influences. He inspired me to get my Gibson Byrdland in 1962. He's got a blues band in Detroit and cranks."

ELVIN BISHOP: "I never liked his playing. I jammed with him and Mike Bloomfield and he was always stumbling."

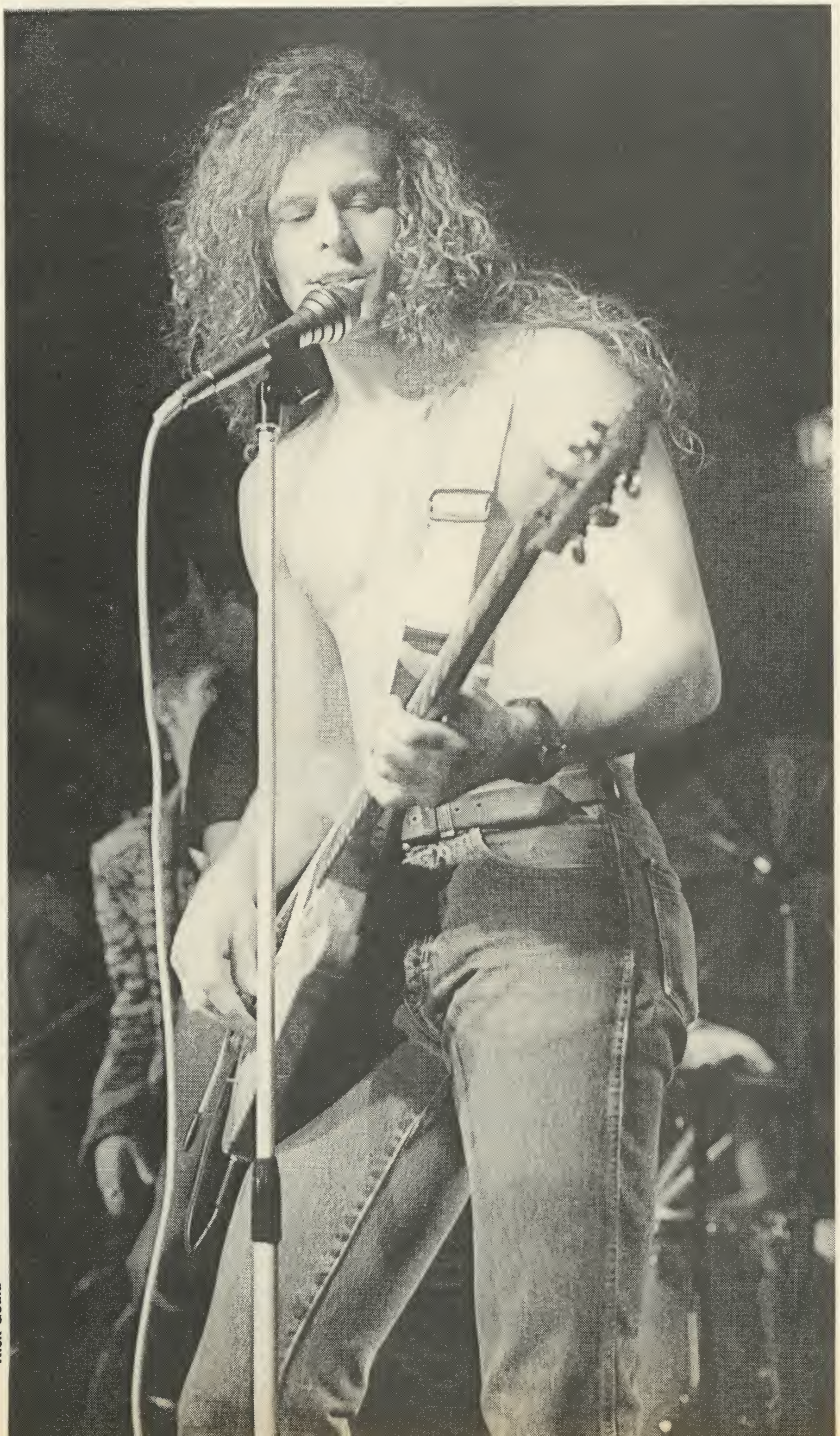
DICK WAGNER: "Great guitarist who plays all the traditional Chuck Berry rhythm and blues styles in an exciting, emotional approach, always effective."

STEVE HUNTER: "From the same school—went to town and electrocuted the Chuck Berry style, very influential in music."

TOMMY BOLIN: "I have problems with guys like Tommy, who was a great player but was so badly stoned most of the time that his playing was divertly diffused—a mere shadow of his potential."

DAVE DiMATO (TED NUGENT): "I discovered him in a club in Los Angeles where he was playing the best of the traditional Chuck Berry, Jimi Hendrix, Eddie Van Halen and more. He has an electric style."

TED NUGENT: "An uninhibited, Chuck Berry devotee but experimented with and broke a lot of ground on feedback techniques and solid variations in tonal and dissonant utilizations. I'm one of the best guitarists in the world, and I play with great emotion."



Rick Gould

HAMMERING-ON



Octave Intervals

By Steve Lynch

In this special series of columns for Guitar World I'll display some of the hammering techniques I've used on- and off-record. Some of the things we'll be covering are: Pentatonics, Double Pentatonics, Intervals, Arpeggios, Bending, Sliding, Harmonics, Major, Minor and Harmonic Minor Scales, various tricks and much more. All using double-handed hammer-ons. I will also be explaining what chords they work with and how to fit them in properly.

Here is how we'll be reading the technique: The numbers on the graph show in what order the notes are to be played. The shapes around the numbers tell how the note is played:

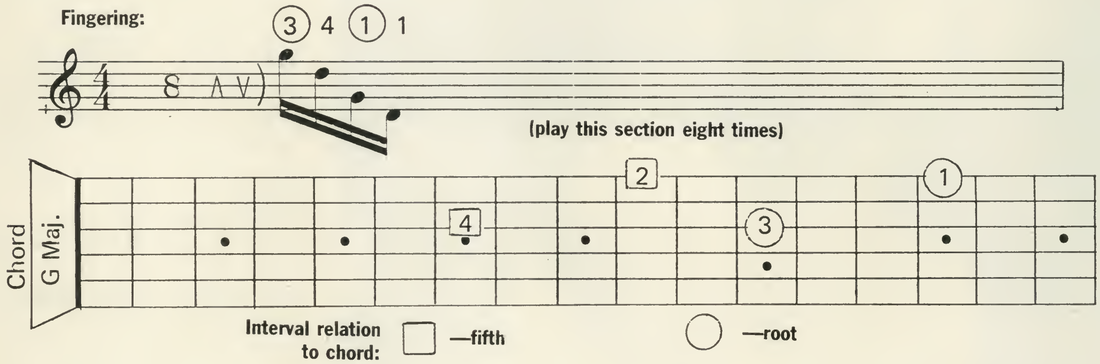
○ - Hammer-on with right hand
□ - Pull-off from right hand to left
△ - Hammer-on with left hand
◇ - Pull-off or slide with left hand

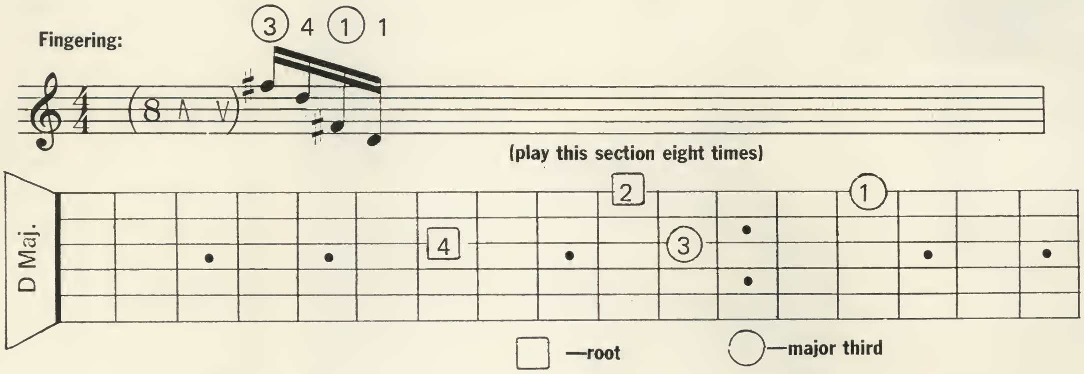
The numbers above the staff tell what fingering is suggested. The circled numbers are played with the right hand only. The chord it's played against is written to the left of the graph. Happy Hammering!

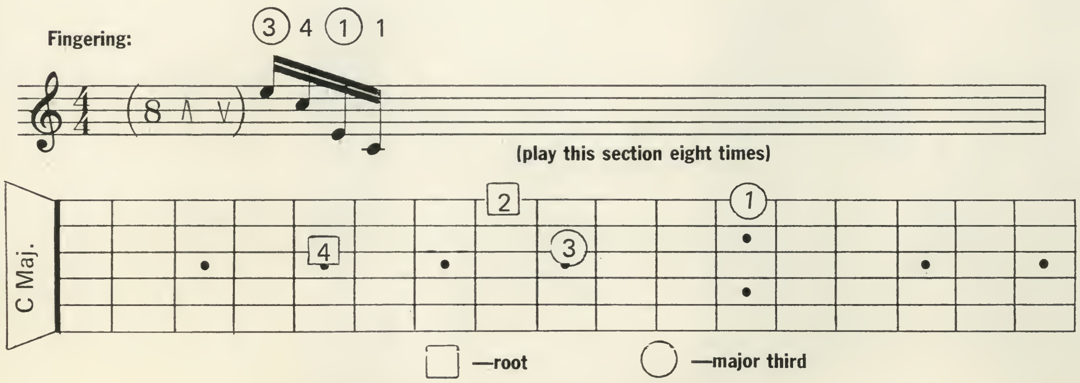
Lesson I

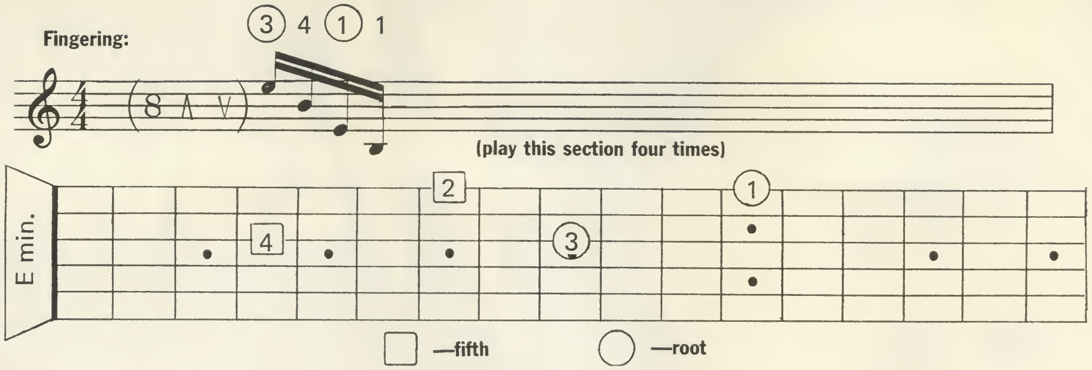
This first selection is the last eight bars from the solo in "Friday" from the Autograph album *Sign In Please*. It utilizes octave intervals with as little movement as possible to follow one chord to the next. The last bar is pull-offs landing on a G maj. chord to finish up.

Steve Lynch is a member of RCA recording group Autograph. This is the first in a regular series of columns by Lynch.

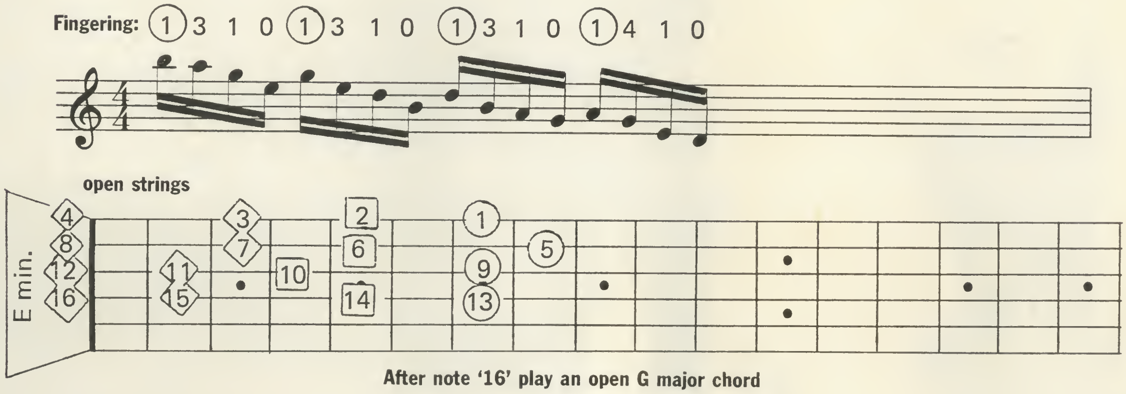








Fingering:
3 4 1 1
8 A V
(play this section four times)
E min.
2
4
3
1
—fifth
—root



Fingering: 1 3 1 0 1 3 1 0 1 3 1 0 1 4 1 0
open strings
E min.
4 8 12 16
11 15
3 7
10
2 6 14
1 9 13
5
After note '16' play an open G major chord

Hawk

has landed!



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M.P.H.



Cleaner, Faster Scales

By Tony MacAlpine

One of the most important aspects of guitar playing is control. When overlooked, the results can be disastrous. To eliminate this possibility, I would recommend you dust off the old metronome, fire it up and begin with lots of authority.

Example one: Complete this in a chromatic fashion, ascending every four times up the neck starting on the high E string. Repeat on every string. Gradually, you may increase the tempo of your metronome to establish more fluidity. Remember always to pick each note (up and down) on this study.

An impressive way to execute cleaner scales is to understand and practice a few mathematical studies. The first one will utilize a minor scale example. Play the minor scale starting on the fifth fret E string, from A to A high-string fifth fret (two octaves), just to understand the notes involved. Using multiples of four, we will start on the fifth fret with our first finger and play the first four notes of the A minor scale, A B C D. Next start on B (7th fret) and play the next four notes in A minor, B C D E. You continue to start on the next degree of the scale until you reach A on the high E string, 5th fret A.

The second mathematical study involves the multiples of three-note successions applied to the A minor scale. Starting on the A fifth fret low E string to A fifth fret high E string. Also remember that once you have mastered these studies, you may expand study at a slower pace by playing in both directions (High E 5th fret to low E 5th fret) and to other scales, B♭ minor, B minor, C minor and so on.

Tony MacAlpine may be heard extensively on Rudy Sarzo's Driver *lp, as well as on his own Shrapnel record,* Edge Of Insanity.



An Amazing Story!

THEY LAUGHED WHEN I SAID THEY COULD HAVE PERFECT PITCH— BUT WHEN THEY HEARD FOR THEMSELVES...!



World famous for his Perfect Pitch Seminar, Burge explains how to gain Perfect Pitch. His simple teaching is for all musicians.

It's a universal fact: you need a great ear to make it in music. Keyboardist David L. Burge, 30, tells the true story of how he unlocked the secrets to the Perfect Ear.

by David L. Burge

It all started when I was in ninth grade. There was this girl in my school named Linda—she was supposed to have an incredible gift. They said she could name any pitch *by ear!* They said she had "Perfect Pitch."

I tried to imagine it. Do you mean if I play a B♭, she can tell me *without looking?* It seemed impossible. How would she know B♭ from A, B, or C?

But then again, if there *were* such an ability...it would enhance your entire understanding of music! All musicians—from rock to classical—would want to identify pitches by ear!

It was too fantastic a claim. I doubted it.

The Challenge

Indignantly I sought out Linda and asked if the stories were true. Could she really name any tone just by hearing it? Casually, she said she could.

I felt more than a little incredulous at this point. I rudely asked, "Do you mind if I test you sometime?"

"OK," she responded cheerfully. It made me all the more curious and impatiently excited. I *had* to get to the bottom of this musical mystery.

At the first opportunity I reminded Linda about my "challenge."

I carefully picked a time when she had not been playing the piano. I had her stand where she could not see the keyboard. I made sure other classmates could not give her cues. Everything was set just right so I could expose this thing as a ridiculous joke.

Inside me the tension was mounting. Linda, however, appeared serenely unaffected. With silent apprehension I chose an obscure note: F#. (This will confuse her!)

I had barely touched the tone. No sooner had it sounded than she *instantly* said, "F#"!

I was astonished! It was so amazing that I quickly played another tone.

She didn't even stop to think. *Immediately* she announced the correct pitch. I played more and more tones here and there on the keyboard, and each time she knew the answer—without any visible effort. Unbelievably, she identified the pitches as easily as colors.

"Sing an E♭," I demanded, determined to confuse her. Quickly she sounded the proper pitch. I asked for more tones (trying hard to make them increasingly difficult), but still she sang every one perfectly on pitch.

"How in the world do you do it?" I exclaimed. I was totally boggled.

"I don't know," she replied. "But I'm sure it's something you can't buy."

The reality of Perfect Pitch hit me hard. My head was swooning with disbelief, yet I knew from my own experiment that Perfect Pitch is real.

My Musical Quest

"How does she do it?" I kept asking myself. On the other hand, why can't *everyone* do it?

It dawned on me that most people go through their entire lives listening to music, yet they seldom know the tones they hear. Most *musicians* cannot tell C from D#, or G major from F major. It seemed odd and contradictory.

I found myself even more mystified than before I had tested her.

Humiliated and puzzled, I went home to work on this problem. At age 14, this was a hard nut to crack.

You can be sure I tried it myself. My brothers and sisters would test me. Each time I would try to carefully determine the pitch by how high or low it was. Almost every attempt failed miserably.

I tried day after day to locate that "mental pitch barometer." I tried to feel each tone. I tried to visualize them. I tried associating things to them. Then I tried to memorize them by playing them for long periods. But nothing worked. The situation proved utterly hopeless.

After weeks in vain, I finally gave up. Linda's gift was surely unusual and extraordinary. But it was for her and a select few like her. Others were not meant to have it. And do not ask me how she does it, because I have no idea.

The Realization

But just then something miraculous happened. I had stopped *thinking* about the problem. I had stopped *trying*. I had stopped *intellectualizing* all about listening. Now, for the first time, *I STARTED TO LISTEN NATURALLY.*

Suddenly I began to notice faint "colors"

within the tones—similar to the colors in a spectrum of light. But I did not *see* colors—I *heard* the sublimely delicate "sound colors" which exist in all of music—the pure and natural colors of the *sound* spectrum. They had always been there. But this was the first time I had ever really paused to listen.

Now I could name the pitches by ear! It was simple. An F# sounded one way—a B♭ had a different "color sound." It was as easy as seeing red and blue!

Instantly the realization hit me: THIS IS PERFECT PITCH! This is how Bach, Beethoven and Mozart were able to hear music mentally and sing and identify tones at will—by "color sound." It's simple!

I became convinced that every musician has Perfect Pitch in his or her own ear, but the vast majority have never really learned to *listen.*

I tried out my theory on my close friend, Ann. She is a flutist. I told her that Perfect Pitch is easy, and that she could do it herself.

"Oh, I could never have Perfect Pitch," she laughed. "You can develop a good *Relative* Pitch [comparing one tone with another], but you have to be *born* with Perfect Pitch."

"People feel that way because they don't understand what Perfect Pitch is," I explained. "It's really easy—all you have to do is listen!" I sat down at the piano and showed her my discoveries.

She agreed with everything I showed her. She *had* to, because she heard everything for herself. But she still had a nagging doubt that this was really Perfect Pitch.

The next couple of weeks we dabbled a bit more. Though hesitant at first, Ann gradually came to identify tones with incredible accuracy. Of course, this is the very definition of Perfect Pitch. It soon became clear she had fully acquired the skill which before was a mere fantasy.



"How in the world do you do it?" I exclaimed. I was totally boggled.

Fame spread throughout our school that Ann and I had Perfect Pitch. We became instant celebrities. Students would often dare us to name pitches, sing tones, what chord is that, how high did she sing, give me an A, etc. Everyone was amazed.

Perfect Pitch allowed me to progress far faster than I ever thought possible. After all, hearing is the basis for all music. Not only did I receive A's in ear-training (no problem!), but I completely skipped over required college courses. Most important, I learned that no amount of practice, lessons, or equipment can ever replace the value of your ear.

Spreading the Knowledge

That's how it all started. Little did I know that years later I would be teaching seminars on Perfect Pitch.

Actually, I rejected the idea of seminars at first. There were so many misconceptions about Perfect Pitch. People often *laughed* when I said they could have it. Some thought it would bother them if things were out of tune. I guess it's easy to downplay something when one feels it is beyond reach.

But Perfect Pitch adds a dazzling new dimension to listening. It's a total artistic sense which promotes tremendous levels of talent in every phase of musical activity—from performing and playing by ear, to improvising, listening and writing, singing, transposing, tuning, better memory—and much deeper *enjoyment* of music. Perfect Pitch means *increased powers of listening.*

I let musicians test me to prove my points, but it didn't help. They usually felt that I had the knack, but for them it was unattainable.

How was I to calm this skepticism? Remember, at that time I did not have the thousands of students worldwide who are experiencing Color Hearing for themselves.

So I went back to the basics. I would prove my points in just one simple way: by having people *hear for themselves.*

It worked! No amount of lecturing could do it. No amount of testimonials. No amount of logic, persuasion or research would prove it to some. But even "old school" professors were gratefully changing their minds when they *experienced* their "first taste" of real Perfect Pitch. Rock musicians, classical, jazz—they heard for themselves! All talk became unnecessary.

The Experience

The experience is both subtle and awesome. It's like switching from a black and white to a color TV. Without Perfect Pitch it's like "black and white" hearing—all the tones sound pretty much the same, just different shades of "gray."

Perfect Pitch gives you the *colors* of the tones. Color lets you recognize them—an A over there, a C# here, E major chord there, etc. Each tone has its own unique color sound. That's why I like to refer to Perfect Pitch as "Color Hearing."

Perfect Pitch is definitely something you can't buy. Instead, you unfold it *from within yourself.* I feel fortunate that I'm able to offer the knowledge of how to develop it. It's ridiculously simple. But you have to hear for *yourself* to gain it. It's yours—inside you, waiting, free as the air you breathe. And it's a priceless musical possession.

To start, you just need a few basic instructions. As your ear becomes cultured you begin to enjoy and use these delicate sound colors. You learn to hear beauty you may never have appreciated before. It's a whole new awareness—once you uncover it you own all its possibilities.

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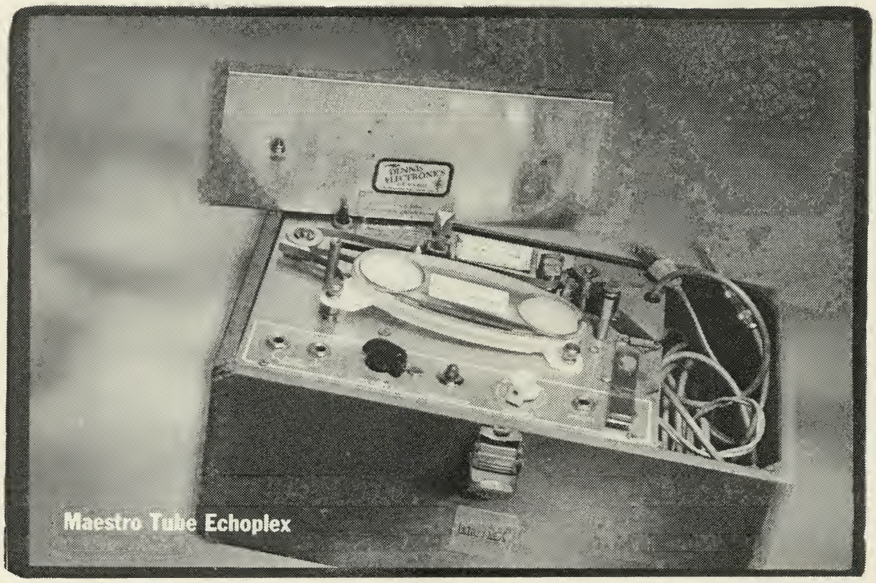
Stone Age Stomp Boxes

By Steve Stevens

As man was derived from monkeys, if you believe Darwin, I believe that today's modern digital reverbs and multi-effects processors are derivative of the stone age stomp boxes brought forth in the 1960s. The unique sounds of many of these boxes cannot be reproduced, even using modern technology. I often apply these historic sounds to modern recording, a process which heightens their idiosyncracies. For these reasons alone, they are worth discussing here.

The Fuzz-Face, created by Dallas Arbiter, an English company that stopped production years ago (but still distributing some inventory models). This has a very smooth fuzz to it. The unit is really well-suited to use with single-coil pickups *a lá* Stratocaster, used by Jimi Hendrix. The ones Jimi used were custom-modified by Roger Mayer, who did Jimi's effects for him. [*Mr. Mayer is marketing his own Roger Mayer Classic Rocket Fuzz today, incorporating the circuit design he applied to Jimi's sounds—GW Ed.*]

This box leaves nothing to subtlety, but it's a really fine effect, very smooth, sort of like the Electro-Harmonix Big Muff. The construction of this unit is really rugged. You can hit it from any point on the stage with your foot. The unit I have is blue. Warren Cuccurullo, late of Missing Persons and currently with Andy Taylor, has had this unit installed into his guitars. He seems to really favor it.



Maestro Tube Echoplex

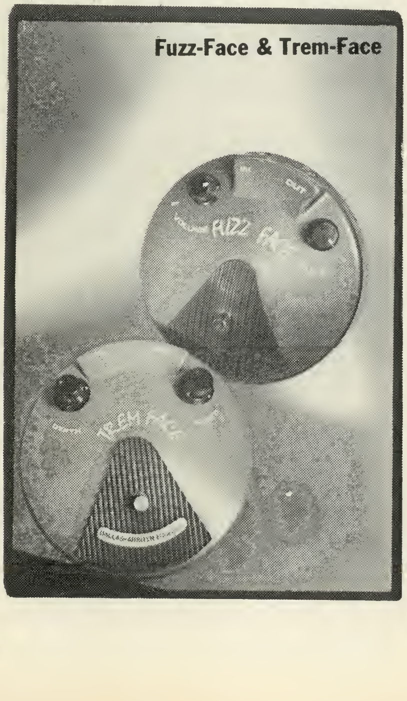
Harold Sinclair

Trem-Face, also by Dallas Arbiter. Once you use this unit, it's immediately time to get out your incense and your Maharishi books. It's not much in the way of usefulness, but it is the companion brother of the Fuzz-Face. It looks exactly like it, only the unit I have is in an orange color. It's featured a lot on some of the Hendrix albums. It has the classic tremolo/vibrato sound. Things like "Crimson And Clover" have that sound.

The Tube Echoplex. Most enthusiasts have probably seen the Maestro Echoplex, which uses the wonderfully hard-to-get Maestro tape cartridge. This Echoplex unit is my favorite echo machine, used by numerous players like the ones I've listed below [*see sidebar—GW Ed.*] The one that I have is an older model which employs a 12AX7A tube in the preamp stage, which just lends itself to the natural distortion of the unit. There is nothing else—no digital delay'll sound like this unit.

It can be heard at the very beginning of Billy Idol's new album, *Whiplash Smile*—the sound which a lot of people think are synthesizers or something is a tube echoplex. You can get jungle sounds with it and anyone who has heard the "Quadrant 4" cut on the Billy Cobham *Spectrum* album has heard Tommy Bolin do some incredible things with it by varying the head—the playback head is actually movable, and you can sweep it across the tape itself. It makes for a great sound.

MXR Phase 90. I never found this unit to be particularly useful until Eddie Van Halen came along and used it in sort of a heavy metal context. He uses it at a very slow rate, almost like a notch filter, a sweeping notch filter. It heightens the midrange when it's at a certain point. It heightens the upper frequencies at a certain point. And it sounds great when used at full-blast distortion. It's a really, really smooth unit. I think MXR was the first company to come up with such a well-



Fuzz-Face & Trem-Face



MXR Phase 90



Uni-Vibe

Harold Sinclair

constructed and really stompable box. It's a really rugged box and just about everyone has owned one at some point or another.

Clyde McCoy Wah-Wah Pedal. This is the predecessor to the Crybaby made by Vox (Thomas Organ Company). This is the thing you hear on *Shaft* and things like that. I swear by this unit. It was procured for me by Jol Dantzig at Hamer Guitars and I just fell in love with it. I had to replace the pot on it, but they're making all these parts for

Clyde McCoy Wah-Wah



Crybabies available again—"hot pots" and all that kinda stuff—and if you can get hold of an old Crybaby, there's nothing like it. I have a newer one, and for some reason they just don't sound the same.

The Uni-Vibe. The unit that I have came with a foot pedal control to vary the speed. The one that I have has been modified by Roger Mayer to have a potentiometer, which varies the speed on the unit itself. This is heard a lot on the soundtrack from *Rainbow Bridge*. It has a sound resembling that of a rotating Leslie speaker cabinet. It has a chorusing effect, and a vibrato effect. The characteristic sound of this unit is a sweeping vibrato—neo-sixties once again.

When backed off all the way on this pedal, you get that really great Jeff Beck midrange honk. I use it in a lot of solos in a fixed position, as does Michael Schenker. It's a really useful unit. You can almost use it as you would the MXR Phase by manually sweeping it with your foot through a solo, pushing your foot full-forward when playing the lower notes, giving them a brightness, then pulling it all the way back as you work you way up the neck into the higher register, giving those a real midrange sound.

These are the most easily recognizable sounds on records. There are other custom pedals that Jimi used on record, like his Octavias and custom Roger boxes, but these are the ones I found easy to recognize on records, and the ones that have lasted.

Steve Stevens is the musical director of the Billy Idol band. He is currently working up a solo album for Warner Bros. records.

Stompin' Tracks

A selected discology of record tracks where you can hear the various "stomp boxes" mentioned by Steve in this column.

Effect	Tracks
FUZZ-FACE	**Pete Townshend, "Our Love Was,"** ***The Who Sell Out*** **Marc Bolan, "Jewel,"** ***The Best Of T-Rex*** **Jimi Hendrix, ("All of 'em")**
TREM-FACE	**Jimi Hendrix, ("Many of his albums")**
ECHOPLEX	**Tommy Bolin, "Quadrant 4,"** ***Spectrum*****, Billy Cobham** **Steve Stevens, "Worlds Forgotten Boy,"** ***Whiplash Smile*****, Billy Idol** **Brian May, "Brighton Rock,"** ***Sheer Heart Attack*****, Queen**
UNI-VIBE	**Jimi Hendrix, much of** ***Rainbow Bridge***
MXR PHASE 90	**Edward Van Halen, all of** ***Van Halen*** **(group's first lp)**
CLYDE McCOY WAH-WAH	**Jimi Hendrix, "Up From The Skies,"** ***Axis Bold As Love*** **Jimmy Page, "Dazed And Confused,"** ***Led Zeppelin I*** **Jeff Beck, "Morning Dew,"** ***Truth***

TRADING LICKS

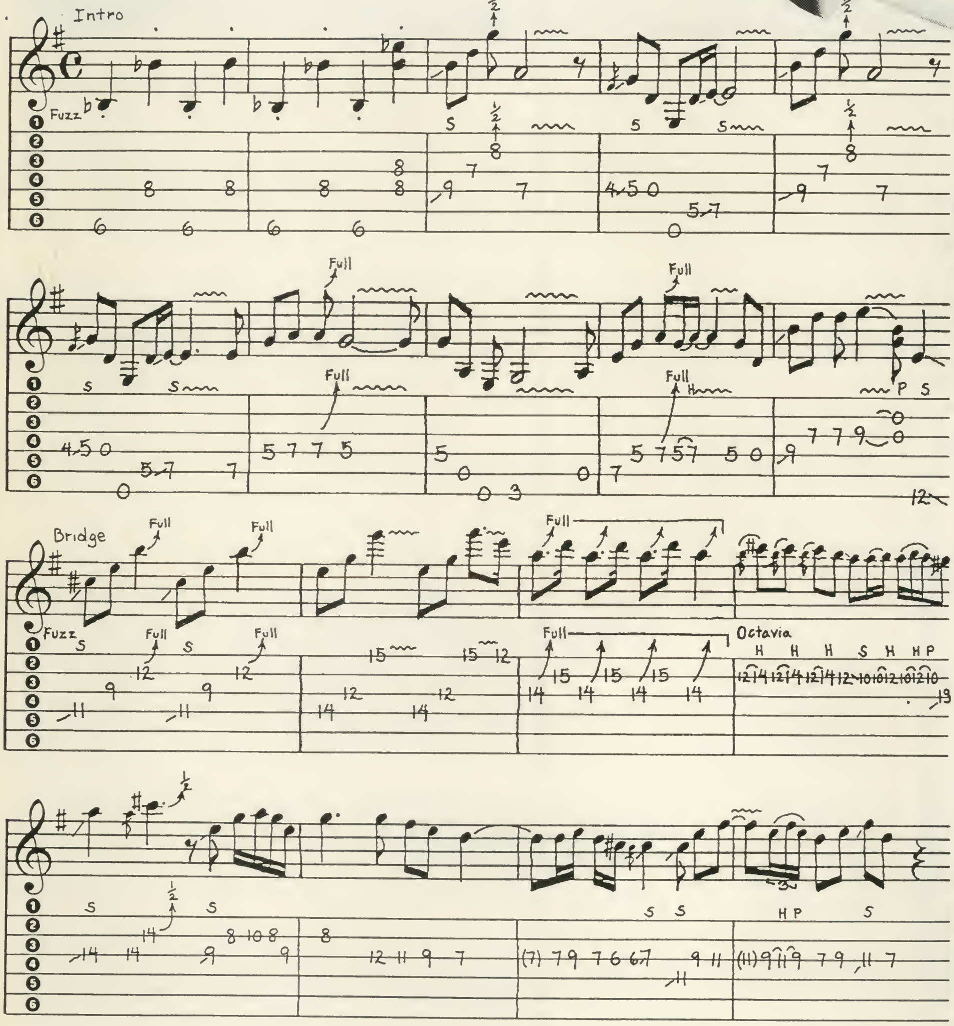
Into the "Haze" With Hendrix

By Dave Whitehill

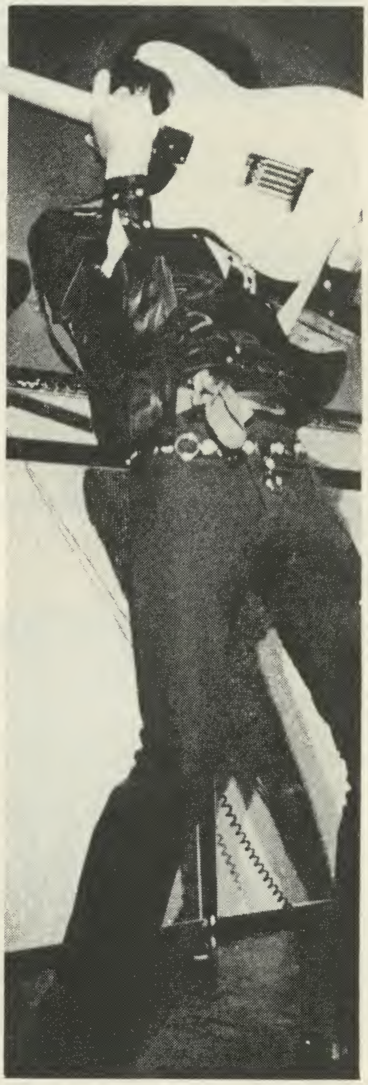
As a concession to novice readers of standard notation, "Purple Haze" has been notated with a different key signature than I usually use. The song should normally be written with four sharps (E major), but I used one sharp (E minor) for ease of reading. Because of all the "blue" notes, this song is closer to minor tonality, so it makes it easier to read. For all practical purposes, "blues" solos, in my opinion, should be written with modal key signatures since the raised seventh is rarely found. But that's academic for my purposes, so we'll stretch the rule a bit to encourage the novice reader to learn the E-major scale and then read a rock solo with the notes altered all over the place. In sum, I used the minor key signatures to make the "blue" notes easier for students.

"Purple Haze" opens with the guitar and bass harmony of a tritone (flatted fifth) or the "Diablo In Musica." You might have been executed for playing this interval during the Spanish Inquisition, since it was supposed to call the Devil. I imagine a Strat is used with a Fuzz-Face and a prototype of an Octavia (frequency-doubler created by Hendrix' electronics maven, Roger Mayer). The bridge solo was written for one guitar, but on the original version of the song a guitar played through an Octavia pedal enters while the first guitar divebombs into oblivion.

Purple Haze
By Jimi Hendrix







Wolman

From the 1967 Reprise record, Are You Experienced? *All existing copyrights apply. This is a subjective, evocative interpretation reconstructed for educational purposes.*


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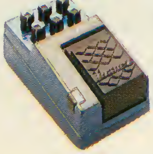
TS10
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MS10
METAL CHARGER: The distortion unit that delivers the "Punch" and "Edge" needed to cut it in nearly any situation.

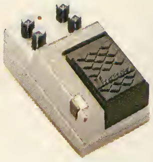
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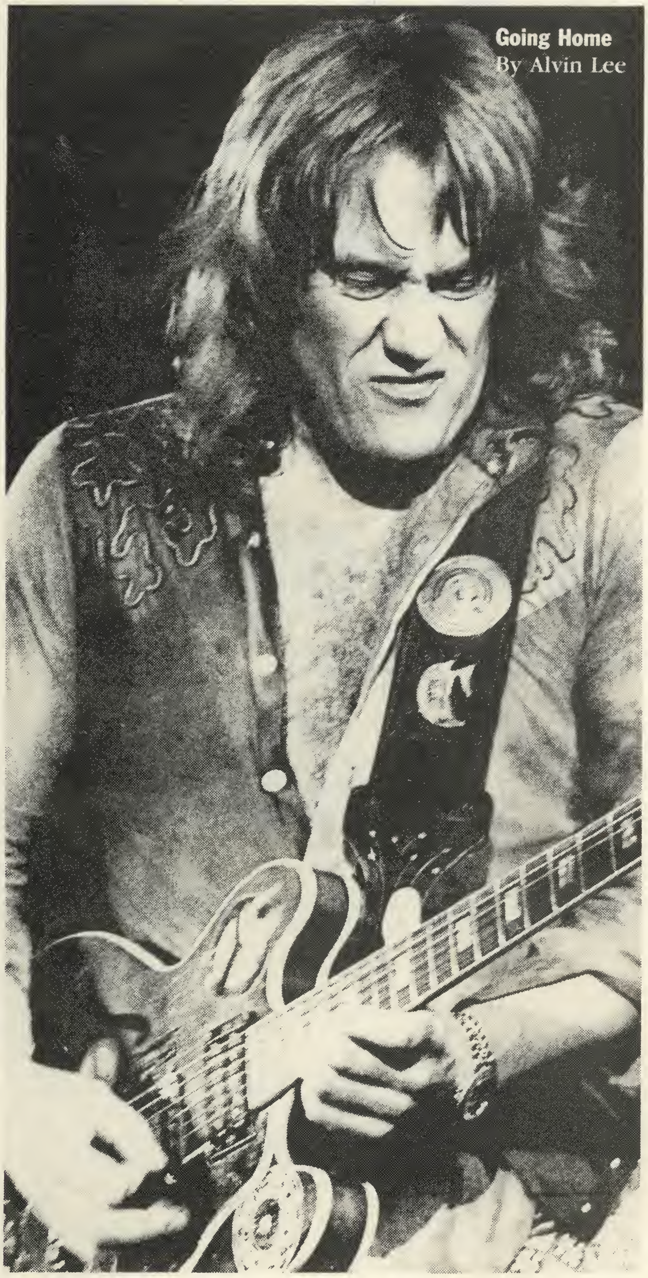
The Fast Way "Home"

By Dave Whitehill

As was the case in "Purple Haze," "Going Home" is also notated in a different key signature to allow for ease of reading by novices. The third note and the seventh note of the scale are flatted, though there is an occasional natural third.

Alvin Lee playing his Gibson ES-335 was one of the high points of the Woodstock festival. The Yngwie of his day, Alvin differed from other blues players like Clapton who favored space between notes and natural hand vibrato, as opposed to speed and flash.

The first thing you'll notice is the 12/8 time signature. A lot of speed is necessary to execute the true manner in which this solo is to be played. A special point about Lee's particular style is his note-bending; as seen in the first bend, on record it appears to be a hammer-on—this must be played smoothly and with a lot of control.



Retna



From the 1970 Cotillion record, Woodstock. *All existing copyrights apply. This is a subjective, evocative interpretation reconstructed for educational purposes.*

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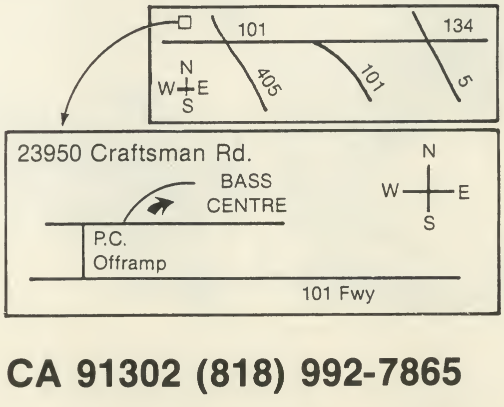
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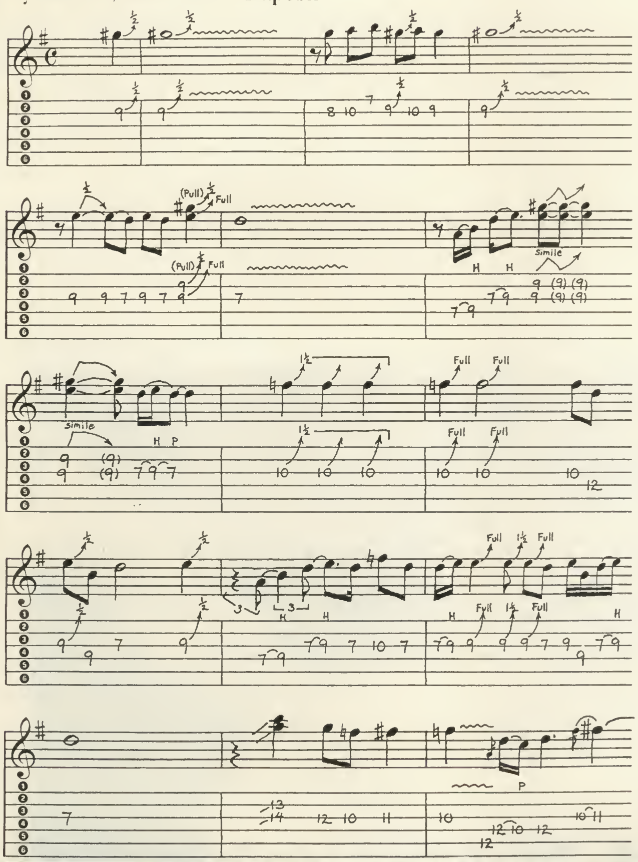
The Cream Of Early Clapton

By Dave Whitehill

Is Eric really quoting "Blue Moon" on his psychedelic SG (now owned by Todd Rundgren)? "Sunshine of Your Love" is a pretty tricky story. I've used one sharp here, the key signature for D mixolydian because of the chord changes found in the song. After the bass and guitar intro, the chords are D and C, which were considered, at the time, the "money" chords. (Think of popular songs from that period like "You Really Got Me" and you'll know what I mean.)

A point here that the student may find difficult to execute is the double-stop bend. It's achieved by pulling both the second and third strings down (towards the floor) with the ring finger flanged into a "backwards bend," or a barre with the second knuckle raised, in other words. The index and middle fingers are also used to help assist the move.

Sunshine Of Your Love
By Brown, Bruce and Clapton





From the 1967 RSO record, Disraeli Gears (music publishers: Unichappel Music, Inc.). *All existing copyrights apply. This is a subjective, evocative interpretation reconstructed for educational purposes.*



Paul Natkin

STAR TECH

The Prince's Trust

By Jon Dworkow

Steve Fortney works with Prince and the Revolution, as a personal guitar technician for Prince Rogers Nelson. He has been with them for two years now, having joined for the *Purple Rain* tour in 1984. The 33-year-old Fortney hails from Plymouth, Michigan, where he lives when not on the road with his wife, Cherie.

Steve literally walked into the job on the eve of the first show of the mammoth tour. With no time to establish a working relationship with Prince prior to that night, Fortney jumped right into the hot seat and has been there ever since.

Part of the job means being ready for anything when it comes to performing and the relationship involves a special form of communication where there is not a lot of talking involved. Through the years, Steve knows when to ask what questions. It's what Fortney describes as an "understanding" between the two of them built upon trust.

His responsibilities are varied. They include equipment set-up and maintenance, but they go beyond that. He is a production coordinator, crew chief and equipment manager. Typically, he has to ship all the gear to those video shoots in Nice, France, from Minneapolis at the last minute, but it has to be in Boston for an unannounced show first. "Unpredictable" is a commonly used adjective in the Prince camp. "Be prepared," assumes much more than a Boy Scout meaning.

Steve has been working in the live music area for 12 years. He credits much of his personal success to the fact that he comes from an area where there was a healthy local music scene. Early on, Steve was working with the likes of such Motor City acts as Bob Seger, Grand Funk Railroad and Brownsville Station. He also spent time working for a local concert promoter as a stage manager and with Black Oak Arkansas, eventually mixing their sound.

"This is a hard business to break into," acknowledges Fortney. "To be accepted, much less successful, one needs dedication, a working knowledge of the equipment and a special type of personality in being able to relate to the players. Also, don't underestimate a good education." Fortney refuses to play the role of a "yes man." He will tell the truth, even if he knows it won't be what the performer wants to hear.

Fortney also feels lucky that he works with performers who don't use drugs or drink. "I've been to shows where I'm visiting some of my friends, who work for some of the biggest acts, and the guys they work for would come in after a big night of bashing, acting like cranky kids. I admire these players, but I wouldn't ever work with them."

In 1977, Fortney teamed up with Ted Nugent and was involved in Nugent's tours of baseball stadiums and arenas across the country during a very exciting period. Before working with Nugent, Fortney was a behind-the-scenes guitar technician. He became Ted's personal tech dealing with the musician onstage during performances. He was an intregal part of the Nugent organization until 1983 when he started with Bob Seger and The Silver Bullet Band on "The Distance Tour." During the time he was with Seger, Steve helped them update most of the band's existing older equipment by introducing the musicians to new equipment that was recently developed.

After the tour was over, Fortney was involved in a job that was something of a departure for him. A friend asked him to go out on the Jacksons' Victory tour, working in the area of merchandising (tee-shirts and souvenirs).

Things were pretty quiet into the fall of 1984 until he got a call in October on Devil's Night at 1:30 a.m. from Prince's production manager, Tom Marzullo, asking Steve to be in Minneapolis the next day to go through a last rehearsal and start the *Purple Rain* tour the day after. Fortney walked in and helped Prince perform in front of thousands of fans at Joe Louis Arena in his own hometown of

continued on page 109



T.M. Smith/PCCC

Steve Fortney, somewhere on the road, holding the custom-made guitar made famous by Prince in the film *Purple Rain*. Ax by Dave Rusan of Knut-Koupée, Minneapolis MN.

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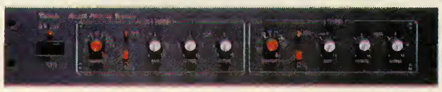
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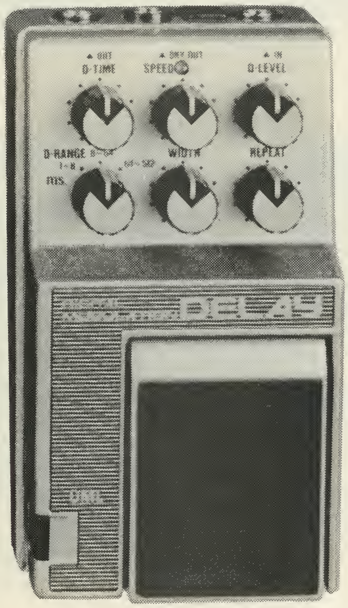
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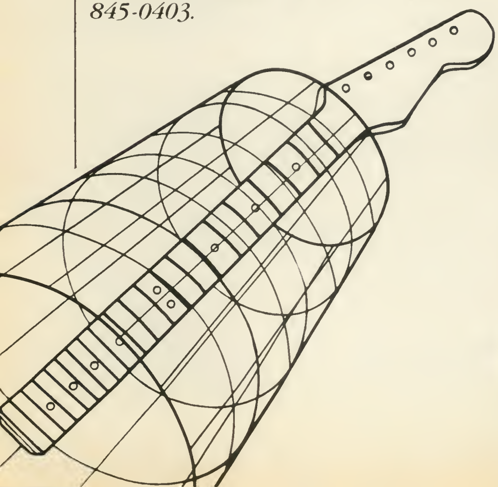
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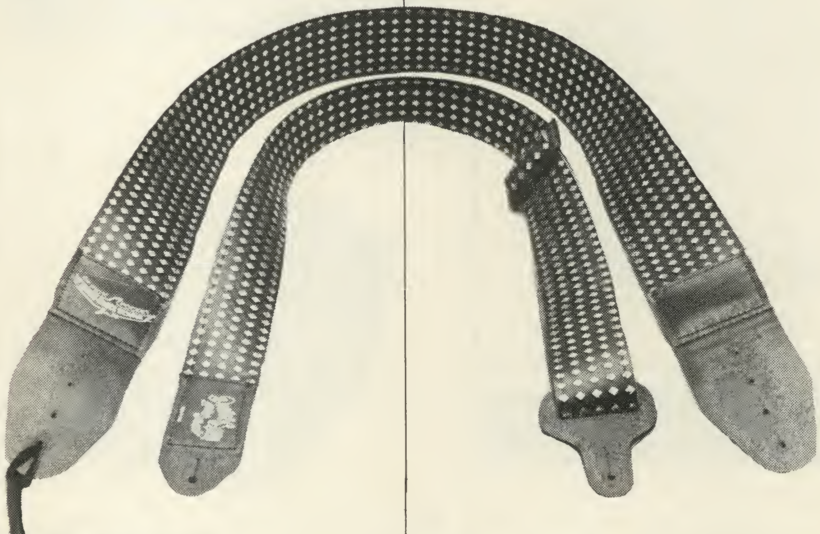
Warmoth Radius Guitar Neck

Designed to give the serious guitarist unprecedented control and ease in chording, bending and two-hand techniques, the compound Warmoth Radius features a traditional 10 inches at the nut but flattens out to a 16-inch radius at the heel, allowing "silky smooth string bending." Necks featuring the Warmoth Radius are offered in standard maple, rosewood or ebony fretboards and in some exotic woods by special order. *Warmoth Guitar Products, Inc., 11610 — 80th Ave. E., Puyallup, WA 98373. (203) 845-0403.*



Engl Straight Amplifier

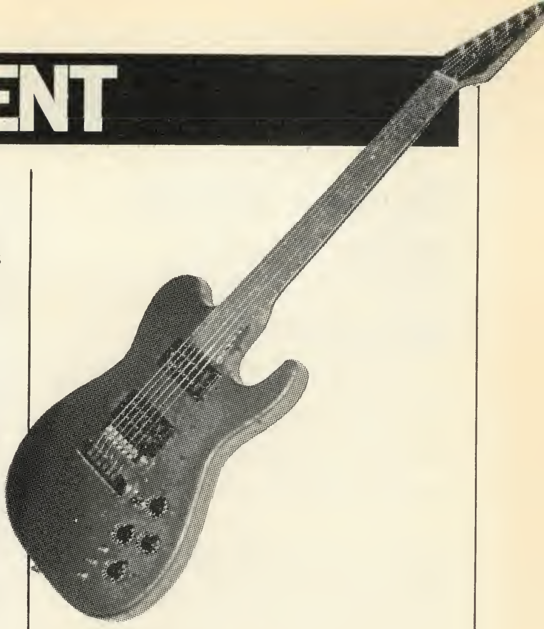
Engl Digitalamps' new Straight 100-watt is a true two-channel, featuring clean and lead gain inputs, all-tube preamp and poweramp stages. Available as a head or combo, the combo is equipped with a GLH 12-inch Celestion speaker. Back panel features include an effects loop and a voltage selector for use overseas. Two 4-ohm connectors are in parallel internally, allowing output to two 4-ohm or one 8-ohm speaker cabinet. According to Bruno Engl, the strong point about the Straight is the lead channel, offering a myriad of brilliant tonalities. Available in black and white Tolex. *Engl Digitalamps, 48 Cheese Spring Rd., Wilton CT. 06897. (203) 367-2711.*



Silver Eagle Guitar Straps

Whatever your taste or style, you're bound to find a guitar strap for you from Silver Eagle Designs, whether it's the Heavy Metal or the Con Tempo Designer Strap. There's also the Stretcher, Checkerboard, the Shuttle Strap, and much more. All straps are built to last, utilizing textile technology and top-grain leather. *Silver Eagle Designs, Inc. 6747 Valjean Ave., Van Nuys CA 91406. (818) 786-8696.*

NEW EQUIPMENT



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Community Light & Sound announces the addition of the CS70 full-range loudspeaker system to its line of affordable, compact modular components. Utilizing four specially-designed 12-inch low-frequency drivers, two midrange drivers, and a Focused Array™ high-frequency response section, the CS70 offers exceptionally smooth, flat response from 45 to 18,000 Hz. Capable of producing continuous SPL levels in excess of 130 dB at 1 meter, and peak levels in excess of 140 dB, the CS70 is one of the most powerful cabinets in its class. Built for the rigors of the road, its fuseless internal protection enhances overall performance and reliability. *Community Light & Sound, Inc. 333 Fifth Street, Chester, PA 19013. (312) 367-8187.*

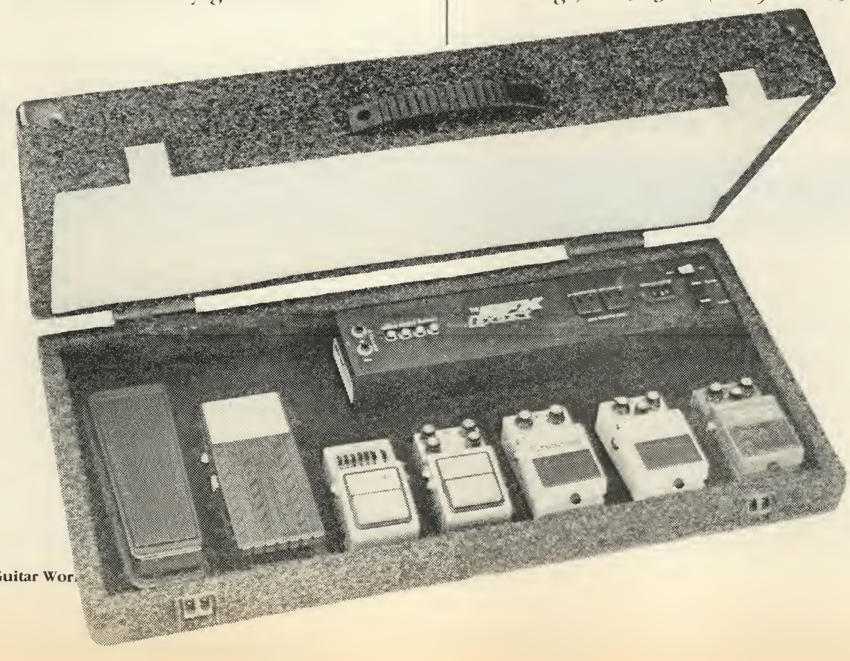


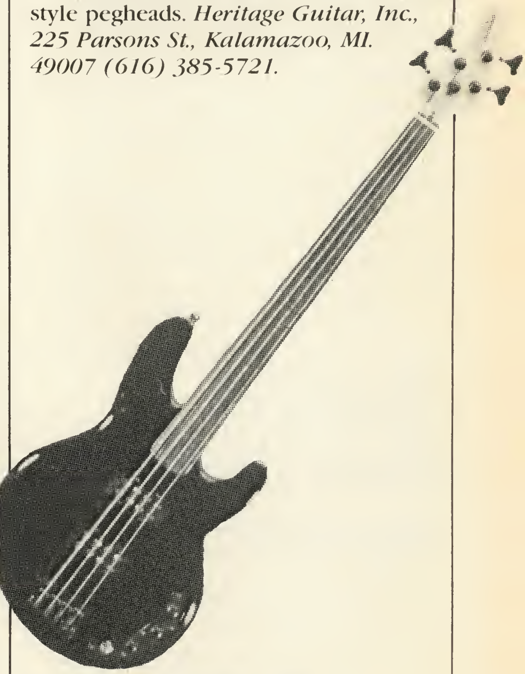
Heritage H-127V Model Guitar

New from Heritage Guitar of Kalamazoo is the H-127V model. The instrument has a two-piece mahogany body and a one-piece mahogany neck. The 24-fret rosewood fingerboard is 24-3/4 inch scale length and features pearl dot inlays. The two humbucking pickups include a volume and tone control for the front pickup with a coil-tap feature. A special Var-I-Phase volume and phase control is featured in the bridge pickup. Available in various colors and choice of standard style pegheads. *Heritage Guitar, Inc., 225 Parsons St., Kalamazoo, MI. 49007 (616) 385-5721.*

The EFX Box

Sure to be a favorite of any guitarist, the EFX Box packs a whopping 1.5 amps of regulated current, while premium components assure faultless filtration. The two AC receptacles are where they should be—next to the pedals. No more stage clutter, so even finicky effects will operate hum-free. An enclosed unity gain buffer eliminates signal loss from long cord runs. Holds from six to nine pedals of various sizes and shapes. Features a detachable lid, with foam insert, securing pedals during transport. The roadworthy case is constructed with 1/2-inch wood and covered in Ozite. Modifications available. *The EFX Center, 19025 Parthenia Street, #126, Northridge, CA 91324. (818) 886-0500.*



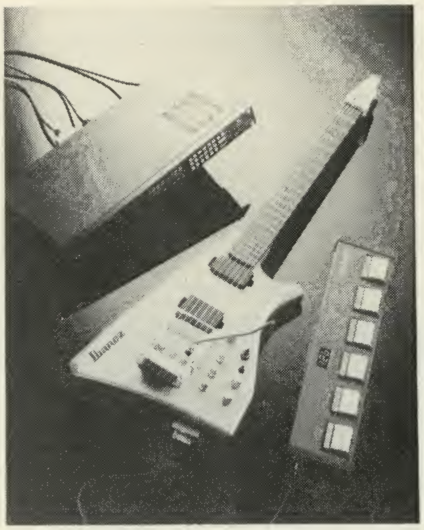


Robin Fretless Freedom Bass

For the fretless player, the Freedom Bass features a 34-inch scale length, two hot humbucking pickups, an ash body and a rosewood fingerboard on a bolt-on maple neck. Available in pearl yellow or black. *Robin Guitars and Basses. 2042 Portsmouth, Houston TX 77098. (713) 520-1150*

Ibanez IMG1 MIDI Guitar Interface

"A great leap forward in the heretofore finicky world of MIDI controllers."



Since the introduction of the GR-700 series MIDI/guitar synthesizer in 1984, the market for guitar-to-MIDI converters has been growing slowly but surely, although hampered by relatively high prices and a practical monopoly in product choices. 1986 introduced several new competitors into the marketplace to the benefit of guitar/MIDI enthusiasts everywhere.

The first successful competitor to the GR-700 was introduced by Ibanez/Hoshino. The Ibanez IMG1 system consists of a special guitar controller, the IMG2010 and an MC1 rackmount MIDI interface. This package uses the basic Roland cabling scheme, which means that the choice of controllers extends to all those that are already usable with Roland systems. The similarity ends there, because the MC1 controller affords the player noticably better tracking and many features which were sorely missing from the first generation Roland product. We'll consider each component separately.

A special feature of the IMG2010 is the multi-use control arm, rigged to look like a tremolo bar. This arm can be used to control synthesizer performance parameters as you wish to assign them, pitch-bend being among many of them. A separate phone jack is provided so that you can use the IMG2010 as a straight electric guitar with two humbuckers, master tone and master volume controls.

The MC1 guitar/MIDI interface has a rather extensive set of features. 128 memories can be used for setting up the attached MIDI synthesizers. Pitch-bend can be continuous or chromatic (quantized to half-steps). The functions of one of the knobs on the IMG2010 guitar can be programmed to control a performance parameter on the attached MIDI keyboards.

The IMG1 performed as expected: it is a great leap forward from the Roland GR-700 series. The tracking has been improved and gone are those annoying glitches that rendered the GR-700's so finicky to play. In fact, if you are careful you can get the MC1 to track some two-handed stuff when you have the sensitivity set high and have a synth patch selected that has a fast attack (and you can do it cleanly).

There are many ways to use it. I like to layer sounds by assigning different patches to separate strings. Using the polytimbral mode on the Ensoniq ESQ-1, a natural choice for this sort of thing, I've set the two highest strings to vocal "Ahhs," the middle two to strings, and the bass two to cellos. A big sound! You can, of course, plug into a single timbre instrument. Since the MC1 supports the use of MIDI mono mode, in theory, you could route the strings through six separate MIDI synths. You couldn't do this before the Ibanez system. If you use a sequencer, whether it is built-in like the ESQ-1 or Casio CZ-5000, a separate device like the Yamaha QX-1 or a computer-based sequencer software program, the Ibanez system is a natural way for the guitarist to build up multiple MIDI tracks.

The best news for us is the price—$1695 with the IMG2010 guitar controller. If you already own a Roland-type controller, the MC 1 alone is $695, which should bring tears of joy to those with GR-300 and GR-700 systems. When you consider that a complete IMG1 system combined with a high quality polytimbral synth like the ESQ-1 costs about the same as a GR-700 system alone when it was new and offers you a quantum leap in performance, flexibility and sonic potential, you'll realize how far guitar synthesis has come in just a couple of years.

East Coast: Hoshino U.S.A., P.O. Box 886, Bensalem, PA 19020; West Coast: Chesbro Music Co., 327 Broadway, Idaho Falls, ID 83403 —**Peter Mengaziol**

Rocktron Hush IIC Noise Reduction

"Removes unwanted noise without sacrificing tone quality."

The Hush IIC is a single-space noise reduction unit with low-level expansion and dynamic filtering. A recent addition is a low-pass filter designed to open and close the bandwidth.

The basic use of the Hush IIC (a two-channel unit) is to remove unwanted noise from an audio signal. The first control is a threshold which controls the point at which expansion begins to take place. The filter control adjusts the filter cutoff point, which varies from 400Hz to 4kHz. Included is a release button which selects fast or slow release time. Fast release time is useful for tracking the decay time of the instrument, where a slow release time is good for use with tapes, records and radio.

The line/instrument control adjusts the sensitivity of the unit from -15dBv to +8dBv for the line control. The instrument position is ideal for use with guitar, keyboard and effects. The stereo link feature ties channels 1 and 2 together for stereo applications. The back panel consists of separate ¼" input and output jacks for each channel.



I highly recommend this unit for any system that has a noise problem. It's a small price to pay (list is $399) for the gigantic job that this unit does. This is a standard tool in all of the high-tech Bradshaw effects racks used by such artists as Van Halen, Steve Lukather, Michael Landau and Steve Vai, to name only a few.

Rocktron Corp., 1633 Star Batt Dr., Rochester, MI 48063 —**Andy Brauer**

Rocktron XDC Distortion/ Exciter Deluxe

"Distortion + Exciter= a great tool for the studio."



The XDC is a single-space rack mount unit. User-friendly, with three functions: overdrive, two channels of exciter and output level control.

The gain control adjusts the amount of overdrive and sustain. The brilliance control is a high-frequency adjustment. The output level controls the mix between distortion and clean or bypassed sound. The overdrive incorporates a dual-stage, bi-polar logarithmic amplifier circuit which is capable of producing a smooth and natural distortion sound, and also eliminates the harsh sound that is characteristic of most overdrive units.

A really nice feature, totally unique to any other overdrive unit, is the addition of two channels of exciter. This feature provides adjustment of the phase of the excited signal relative to the direct signal covering a range of 500 Hz to 8KHz. Also, a mix control adjusts the desired amount of excited signal mixed with the direct signal.

The XDC comes with a footswitch which controls the overdrive on/off and exciter 1 and 2 on/off (independently). For example, you can have overdrive on with or without exciter 1. When bypassing the overdrive circuit, the footswitch automatically switches in exciter 2, which really makes for a great clean, sparkling sound.

The level control adjusts the output level relative to the clean signal. I found this control to be very helpful in balancing the distortion level when switching to a clean sound.

My overall impression of the XDC Distortion/Exciter Deluxe is that when first trying the unit out at your local Rocktron dealer's, you should allow yourself adequate time to fully check out the wide range of overdrive tones that this unit is capable of. My only negative comment is that, at first, the distortion seemed nasal and bright. After spending some time with the three controls, I was able to dial in a sound I was quite pleased with. In conclusion, I would say that this is one of the best units available in its price range ($299). The exciter is extremely helpful in dialing in the subtle overdrive tone that you may be searching for. The clean channel, combined with the exciter 2, produces a very useful and great recording sound. Also noteworthy: this unit is going to be a great tool for home recording. Included in this unit is a portion of the Hush II noise reduction circuit to provide quiet performance.

Rocktron Corp., 1633 Star Batt Dr., Rochester, MI 48063

—Andy Brauer

Mesa-Boogie .50 Caliber Combo Amplifier

"A versatile amp in a lightweight package."



A 50-watt-all-tube amplifier with lead/rhythm channel-switching. Reverb, variable direct output, effects send and return are also included in this new Mesa-Boogie .50 Caliber amplifier. The stock speaker is a 12-inch Celestion Black Shadow rated at 90 watts. The only option is a graphic EQ.

The output tubes used in the .50 Caliber are EL84 type, a direct cousin to the EL34, the tube responsible for the great *English* sound. The front panel is laid out as follows: Volume, Master, Treble, Bass, Mid, Reverb and Presence, respectively. The rear panel features dual speaker outputs, 4 and 8 ohm jacks. The send and return jacks as well as the direct output are also located in the rear of the .50 Caliber amplifier.

My first impression of this thing is, "Woooo Boy! This BEAST will melt your socks!" A very happening amplifier.

The clean sound has great bottom, nice highs and has a rich and smooth sound throughout. This here is one ballsy amp, the channel-switching is very smooth and the balance between the lead/rhythm mode is almost unity. The rhythm mode seems just a hair louder with our first test guitar, a 1959 Les Paul Standard. The overdrive channel sings and chirps like a vintage baby Marshall meets a 100-watt Marshall modified 1959 top in heat.

The overdrive is very vocal, and the EQ is fully programmable via the auto function. This feature is very handy, which allows you to preset the EQ and kick it in automatically when switching to the lead mode. The rhythm mode is no slouch, you can dial in great crunchy and dirty sounds without sacraficing clarity and tone. Also noteworthy, the reverb is even between the lead and rhythm mode.

At this point I pulled out my #1 baby, a 1963 Fender Strat, with two Duncan hot stacks and an Invader in the lead position, sporting a Floyd tremolo system. This guitar seemed like it had found a long-lost friend, when combined with a Boogie 4×12 loaded with Celestion-Black Shadow speakers (List $550.00).

I felt as if I was riding a wild horse. Tones so lyrical and rich in sustain, that I really had a very wonderful and inspired time testing this new Mesa-Boogie .50 Caliber combo.

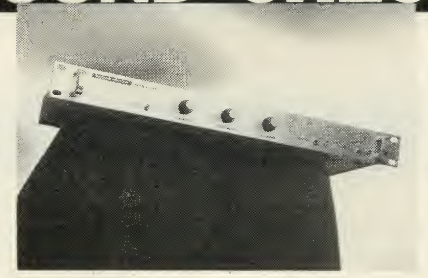
I would highly recommend this amplifier for studio recording. Most of all, this amplifier seems well-suited for the club player who demands a versatile amp in a lightweight package.

Mesa/Boogie Ltd., 1317 Ross St., Petaluma, CA 94952

—Andy Brauer

Roger Mayer's Supervibe

"A special item for the pro and the studio."



While most recently introduced sound effects/enhancement devices boast digital circuitry and computerese technical descriptions, many of them are not completely successful in emulating some of the sound modification effects of the past. There hasn't been an effective all-digital tube-sounding box yet, for instance. Hendrix' sound technician, Roger Mayer, has been re-introducing some of the classic sixties and early-seventies effects with improved circuitry while still capturing those sounds which have been so influential in the course of popular music.

The Supervibe is an update on the old Uni-vibe, which was designed to simulate the sound of a Leslie rotating organ speaker cabinet. This sound was the forerunner of the phase shifter and flanger effects which approximated the swirling shift in timbre. The effect was used by the late Jimi Hendrix and became a signature of early-seventies guitarists like Robin Trower.

The Supervibe has impressive audio specs on its own: at least 92dB signal-to-noise ratio and at least 20 to 50 KHz frequency response. Supervibe circuitry employs four overlapped filters swept by photocoupled resistors. The circuitry design is completely discrete analog with Class A amplifiers throughout. "Class A" is usually reserved for higher-end audiophile amps and preamps.

According to the manufacturer, the use of such circuitry produces a very clean and quiet unit. Another claim states that the Supervibe works without interjecting audio phase shift.

The true test of claims consists of plugging the thing in and listening. As far as the claims, the unit introduces no discernible noise of its own that can be heard at normal amp levels. A claim that Supervibe exhibits none of the swishing or "zipper" noise associated with phasers, flangers and digital chorus boxes is true: the effect is more subtle than the slightly metallic results of using phase shift and delay to produce timbral modification.

As a guitar effect, it did simulate a Leslie speaker quite well, not the exaggerated flanging effects that have become popular. The vibrato was pleasant. When I plugged in an Ibanez MIDI guitar interface with Ensoniq ESQ-1 synth into it, I noticed that string sounds could be livened up by small amounts of chorusing.

Quite frankly, the Supervibe is designed for the studio recording and professional markets. It is rather specialized and since it is custom-made in small quantities, it is not cheap either in construction or price. It is not a mass-market device. There are many pedals that will approximate this effect for a lot less, but it is a unique device for the connoisseur.

Distributed by: Guitar Galaxy, 70 Seventh Avenue South, New York, NY 10014. **—Peter Mengaziol**

Charvel Model 4 Guitar

"The neck is the smoothest—whether for low chording or high-speed hammering."



For the serious-minded player with a careful eye on his wallet, the price alone of the Charvel Model 4 ($799.95) would make it seem more than a little fetching.

The first thing you're bound to notice is the sturdy, Japanese-manufactured Charvel basswood design—contoured a bit thicker than, say, a Strat, it's altogether comfortable and well-balanced, whether in a standing or sitting playing position. Aesthetically pleasing, it's available in a variety of solid-color finishes.

The headstock, which was finished in the same black gloss as our test model, is tilted back, avoiding the need for a string tree. Jackson machine heads allow for smooth and easy preliminary tuning. The Model 4 is equipped with standard Kahler.

Most pleasing was the neck itself. The 22-fret quarter-sawn rosewood fingerboard feels great, and though the nickel silver frets are of good quality and nicely buffed, any refretting due to age would be a breeze. The neck, a splice just past the joint of two pieces of flat-sawn rock maple, appears to have a satiny acrylic finish. With not a rough edge anywhere, the neck is fairly wide but is also relatively flat, allowing for a total ease of playing in various styles, whether it's low chording or upper register speed-hammering.

Jackson pickups and electronics are shipped from California to Japan and incorporated into the Charvel construction. What we have here is a pretty spunky set-up: one Jackson J-50BC Humbucking and two Jackson J-200 bi-level low-impedance Strat-style pickups; one volume, one tone and a Jackson active low impedance electronics knob (variable to + 6 dB at 650 Hz). By employing the three two-way toggle switches, a multitude of sounds is at your fingertips.

I was happily surprised at the assortment of tonal qualities achieved: live in a group rehearsal situation, clean, rich chords one moment, flick a switch and it's buzz-saw leads.

The Kahler Standard tremolo is personal taste. While it's a soft touch, to be sure, I did detect a few audible pops and tweeks through the amplifier that probably shouldn't have been there. Still, this is a great unit for a wide array of applications, dive-bombing especially. (It sould be noted that the factory strings held their tune exceeding well under such whammy conditions.)

Other than small nitpicks (the neck could have been bolted on a little tighter), this is a very impressive instrument, worth the asking price, and one we're probably going to be seeing much of very soon.

Charvel Guitars, 1316 East Lancaster, Ft. Worth, TX 76102. **—Joseph Bosso**


Impellitteri
Marshall
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JWONG

Svengali Steve to the Rescue

Billy Idol
Whiplash Smile
Chrysalis

Ric Ocasek
This Side Of Paradise
Geffen

It's been a busy year for Steve Stevens. There was his production work with Charlie Sexton, his Guitar World tape, the *Top Gun* soundtrack with Harold Faltermayer, working up tunes for his forthcoming Warner Bros. solo album and a six-song presence on Ocasek's latest—all of which was happening during the seemingly interminable production time of this new Billy Idol lp. Now the stuff is starting to come out, so let's dig in.

While the new album by Cars leader Ocasek features performances by the Cars' own Elliot Easton, G.E. Smith, Tom Verlaine (ex-Television) and Roland Orzabal of Tears for Fears, Steve's performances dominate and light up the sessions. *This Side Of Paradise* doesn't break new ground for Stevens, but it uses those patented Stevens' sounds: "Coming For You" features ray-guns and arcade game sounds courtesy of S.S., while the opening cut, "Keep On Laughing," uses soaring tremolo harmonics to set up a wall of sound. Stevens may just be the ultimate heavy guitar sideman, mixing elements of metal, soaring Frippisms and sound effects.

There are surprises, though. "True Love" features a concise nylon-string acoustic lead solo—it's such a nice contrast to hear an acoustic guitar in the synthesizer wash. The vaguely Velvet Underground-esque raga of the title song features undistorted electric guitars against a synthesizer drone with Ric sounding like vintage Lou Reed. How wonderfully nostalgic/progressive! Somewhere in the background, I hear a subliminal wah-pedal underneath and the sound of guitar strings "plinked" behind the nut while being whammied to produce an icy ethereal synthesizer-like texture. The track then segues into a softer r&b groove with acoustic guitar.

On *Whiplash Smile*, the long-awaited Billy Idol album, Stevens shines as the major influence. There is vintage Idol here. The opening cut, "Worlds Forgotten Boy" is classic Idol with S.S. support: fills with harmonic squeaks; sound effects introduce some fast soloing with ray-gun zaps, elephant calls and wham-bar swoops. "Fatal Charm" is a rocker reminiscent of old Idol: S.S. uses wah-wah chords during the opening and crunch chords during the verse and chorus. "Man For All Seasons" is typical Billy Idol format in the beginning, but Stevens interjects acoustic-sounding strums in the guitar-heavy mix. Then it gets interesting: the first crunch solo segues into a Marvin-Gaye-What's-Goin'-On background for a George Benson-ish solo before the next verse. What a contrast!

Idol and Stevens flirt with softer forms of music here also, especially rockabilly kinds of things. "To Be A Lover" is hybrid technopop/rockabilly/gospel, with Stevens slicing guitar glissandos into the light mix. "All Summer Single" is country/rock/technopop with clean bent guitar repeating washes against synths. Then for a change of pace, a crunch solo with reverse reverb fades into the bridge and a return to clean guitar sounds. "Sweet Sixteen" uses acoustics and clean guitars with delay to produce cascading arpeggios. Steve adds some swells, pedal steel sounds and what sounds like backwards guitars.

Stevens' musical direction brings many diverse elements together into a New York fusion that seems to borrow from so many sources that unexpectedly fit together. "Soul Standing By" pits crunch guitar versus a chugging synth somewhat like ZZ Top does. Here, a short solo mixes fast percussive harmonics with classic rock riffs. "Don't Need A Gun" opens with clean guitar chords on DDL repeats against synths like a punk Giorgio Moroder. The solo sounds like Billy Gibbons with tremolo bar. An interesting production touch: the track is interjected with fast-gated reverb acoustic strums sounding almost like pitched snare drums.

Stevens plays around with unexpected (for Billy Idol) instrumental combinations. "Beyond Belief" contrasts a slow-paced electric solo against piano and string synths. "One Night, One Chance" is a study in sparse instrumentation: a solo electric guitar intro gets into a Police-like groove—just drums with guitar before crunch swell takes over as bass enters.

Whiplash Smile as an album is good and, clearly, Stevens' guitar work is great in the way it strikes a balance between the world of guitar pyrotechnics, songwriting and commercial considerations. This album has surprised many people since it sounds a lot more musical than Idol's last one. I think Stevens has a lot to do with that. My only gripe is that many of the solos are too short, almost a tease. I would like to hear some extended solos. Perhaps Steve is saving

them for *his* solo album and that is something we are all waiting for.

—Peter Mengaziol

Johnny Winter
3rd Degree
Alligator

This is the best album Johnny Winter has made in years. It's almost as if his two previous Alligator lp's were detox stops, letting him gradually rediscover the leaner, hungrier sounds he burst out of Texas with some 20 years ago. Maybe that's due to his reteaming with his original rhythm section for a number of tracks, maybe it's just maturity. Whatever the reason, Johnny has stripped his playing of the frantic speed races that too often in the recent past shattered its emotional content, and brought it down to the elemental gut-wrenching blues here, even performing two tunes on National steel to stunning effect.

Few players can match his slide work, of course, and the microtonal melodicism, high-energy swoops, dazzling register leaps and wicked vibrato he unleashes on JB Lenoir's "Mojo Boogie" indicate those chops are all in perfect order. The minor-key blues "Love, Life, And Money" aches with Albert King-ly strained stretches and bitten-off note flurries, while Johnny's take on Freddie King's "See See Baby" nicely reprises some of that great's phrasing while doing some custom Winterizing. Then there's the slow blues called "Tin Pan Alley," in which he builds from mournful lyricism to blistering blitzkrieg, putting that awesome speed to compositional use.

And so on. When he's in form like he is on this one, Johnny Winter's playing burns bright blue—which is why *3rd Degree* catches fire.

—Gene Santoro

Eric Clapton
August
Warner Bros.

Might as well say it: this is the most exciting, most *different* record Eric Clapton has cut since he changed his name to Derek and fronted one of the best groups of players ever assembled. Only a couple of tunes on last year's *Behind The Sun*—"Tangled In Love," for instance—held out the promise of what might happen if he harnessed his increasingly powerful, finessed vocals and heart-stopping guitar to soul-based dance beats. *August* delivers on that promise and them some. Clapton's consistent high energy and the band's insistent, hip rhythms force you to get up and shake your moneymaker before The Man rears back and mows you down, as only he can, with his pure flame of feeling, his endless bursts of melody and his awesome arsenal of guitar tones. In a word, it's inspired.

Right from the first track, "It's In The Way That You Use It," and its chug-a-lug rhythms, you hear it—and when he smears phased, throaty guitar across the top of those snappy horns, you *know* it. Producer Phil Collins has long been among Motown's prime updaters, and here he's helped Clapton meld a groove-infested mix that spans from the sixties to the eighties and, in the process, moves E.C. out of arenas past and onto the present floor. Take "Run," which combines Motown round-robin hooks, disco/funk bass thumb-popping and a sizzling club-mix breakdown, or "Tearing Us Apart," which vibrates with coiled syncopations. Listen to how Robert Cray's "Bad Influence" is transformed to a soul shuffle, how the chattering-synth motif that shapes the Roxy-ish "Walk Away" frames the guitar's anguished cries, how the churning beats of "Hold On" propel a gutsy solo, how on "Miss You" he scoops crunch and lurching phrases from somewhere deep and blue.

So look at it this way. From his days as a Bluesbreaker Clapton could break your heart by lashing his guitar into song. When, during his time as Derek, he found his own voice he replaced the jams with tunes infused with gritty, vibrant fretwork. And now you can—have to—dance to it. Is that a new Clapton, or what?

—Gene Santoro

Albert King
The Lost Session
Stax

Robert Cray
Strong Persuader
Mercury/Hightone

Walter "Wolfman" Washington
Wolf Tracks
Rounder

Guitar great Albert King's searching string-bending and succinct phrasing has inspired several generations of blues-based axwielders, from Clapton and Hendrix to Stevie Ray Vaughan and Robert Cray. Virtually anything he records is worth having, but this is a special treat. Sitting on the shelf for 15 years, discovered only by accident, the master tapes for this new release were produced by British bluesman John Mayall for the soulful Stax label in 1971, three years after the last of King Albert's recording efforts with the amazing Booker T and The MG's house band of that Memphis-based label. (The high points of *those* sessions are collected on *Laundromat Blues,* Edsel ED 130.) *The Lost Session* found King backed by some equally stellar sidemen, like bassist Larry Taylor, tenor sax ace Ernie Watts, trumpeter Blue Mitchell and alto and tenor man Clifford Solomon (both fresh from a stint with Ray Charles), and Mayall himself on 12-string, keyboards and harp. Not as deep-fried funky as *Laundromat Blues,* this lp generally hews closer to a blues line, though with second-line rhythmic spicings ("She Won't Gimme No Lovin'," "Stop Lying"), touches of vibrato-inflected swamp ("Cold In Hand") and some jazzy riffs and solos from the horn section that halo King's tortuous string-stretching and incisive licks ("Tell Me What True Love Is").

One of his aptest pupils is coming more and more into his own. *Strong Persuader* is Robert Cray's fourth release, his first on a major label and thus likely to cash in on last year's widely acclaimed *False Accusations* (Hightone HT 8005). Like Albert King, Cray deliberately straddles blues and soul; no mechanical reiterator of three-chord shuffles, he deals adeptly in a wide variety of rhythms and structures. Dig the marriage between Stax-style organ, horns, and rhythms and burning blues guitar on "I Guess I Showed Her," the intricate dancefloor syncopations and Cropperish guitar threading the swelling horns of "Ain't Nothing But A Woman." Then watch him spin around and slash through a minor-key blues ("I Wonder") that recalls the best of Otis Rush, or stretch them strings into a slinky solo in the best King mode on "Still Around." And not only is he a wonder with a guitar, he's got a big supple voice and writes intense, intelligent lyrics that speak in the ironies of today's blues.

Based in the Crescent City, singer-guitarist Walter Washington earned his own musical stripes crisscrossing generic lines as a sideman for the likes of Fats Domino, Irma Thomas, Little Willie John and Gatemouth Brown. His soulful vocals wind easily through his chugging arrangements, and his guitar bites with fervor, confidence and taste. Like Cray and former boss Gatemouth, he refuses to pigeonhole his blues: listen to the Wes-inspired theme for "Little Cakes" and how he follows it by imaginatively stretching the pentatonic scale over a distinctly non-bluesy set of changes, or the ebullient pop feel of "It Was Fun While It Lasted" and "Can I Change My Mind." And can he play the blues straight? Well, watch him dig into the intense "One Way Or Another" for the answer to *that* question. With this kind of variety, Wolfman, like Cray, demonstrates that the blues can be much more than a rehashed set of relics.

—Gene Santoro

Screaming Blue Messiahs
Gun-Shy
Elektra

For the SBMs, the politics of alienation and the tradition of rock raunch collide to unleash raucous hunks of sound buttressing angry and pointed lyrics like "Now that all the killing's done/Dance to the good cash money, son." Churning echoes of Link Wray and the Cramps, Jimi Hendrix and Robert Quine, the Rolling Stones and the Clash carom around the scruffy vocals and much-abused Tele of bald Bill Carter. No real solos per se—Carter's more interested in playing the varied, sick tones he generates than he is in entering the headbanger-of-the-month contest. **—Gene Santoro**

Bill Connors
Double Up
Pathfinder

We've had McLaughlin sounding like a flute through his Synclavier, and that was difficult to take, yet somehow amazing. This is fleet-fingered Bill Connors getting violin and keyboard tones out of an electric guitar. Why don't these great guitar players want their guitars to sound like guitars? Same answer for both—the instrument is very versatile, and they're probably bored just doing that.

You metal-mongers might dismiss this as "fusion-shit," but the ax mavens will get past that and into Connors' tonal experimentation—double-tracked echoes, volume swells and an inside-out approach to note-bends. There's a lot of repetition here, but it's compositional. When Connors does this, Tom Kennedy's bass and Kim Plainfield's drums fly free. It's a fanciful mesh, you know? **—Noë Goldwasser**

Artie Traum
Cayenne
Rounder

Artie Traum was there in the very beginning, playing those Greenwich Village coffee houses, the same ones Hendrix played in when he was still going by Jimmy James and the Blue Flames. Traum was in the original, *original* Blues Project, one of the first folkies to take the flak from purists about turning things electric. His musical politics, time has shown us, were absolutely correct.

So now that we have this gem of an lp of "spicy new music for acoustic guitar," it strikes me as ironic as I lose myself in these wonderful chord bends, blues things and mood swings that Traum is breaking such awesome new ground with an acoustic guitar. My MIDI-expert colleague, Peter Mengaziol, puts it this way: "In a few years, the hippest thing going will probably be acoustic guitar."

Artie, holed up in his Woodstock refuge, has always kept in touch with the ace musicians. Some of them are here pitchin' in on this record—Larry Hoppen, Scott Petito, brother Happy and friend Rick Derringer (who suggested the platter). All take gleeful back seats to Artie's vision, and they're all having great fun.

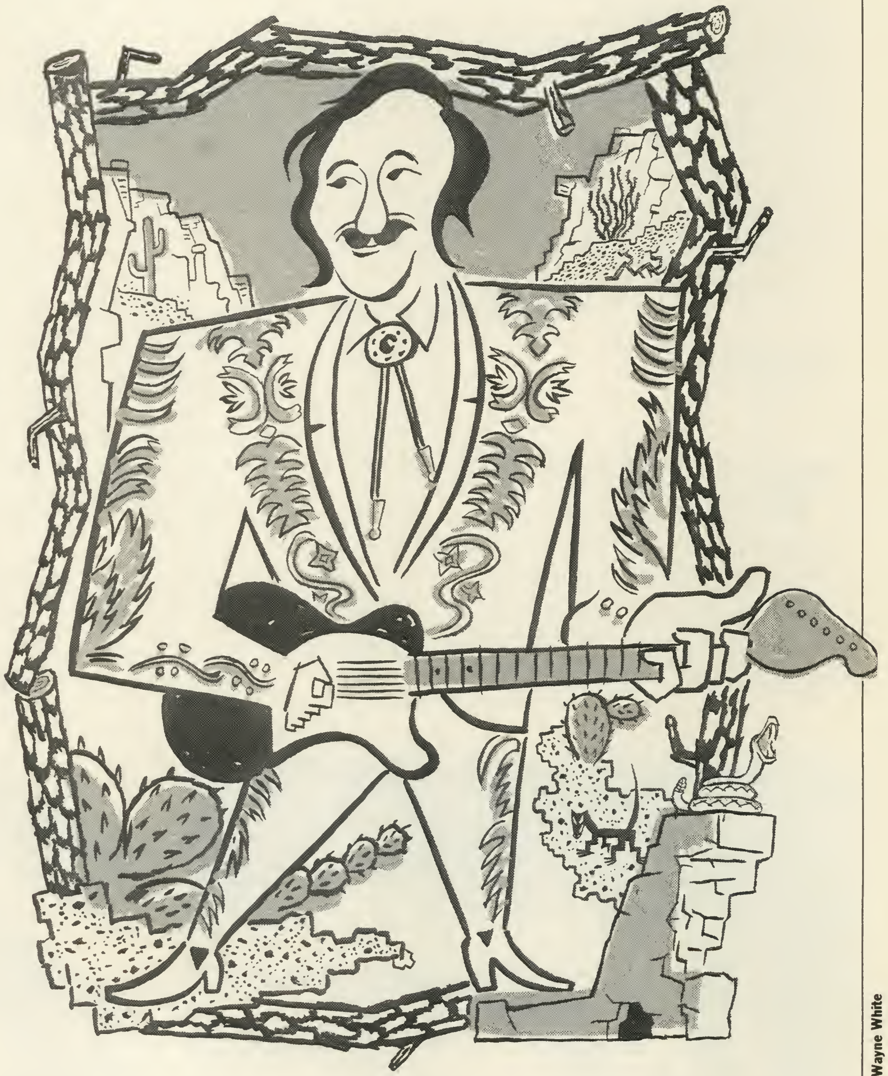
The title cut is a festive workout with a full rock band complement behind Traum's acoustics and Jay Ungar's bristling mandolin; "Catskill Thunder" is the other side of that coin, pleasantly miked acoustic sustains, Traum's patented quaver (always based in da blues), heavy moodscape for texture; "Morning Flight" brings a dobro into the mix (masterfully played by the suspiciously-named "Cyndi Cashdollar'); "Blue Jay Boogie" has Derringer keeping up (!) on electric guitar, bass and keyboards—a different sound, but my fave is Artie solo on "Foolin' Around." It's where he really gets down and shows off.

This is a deep record with a light touch—effortless, yet exquisite. **— Noë Goldwasser**

WAX MUSEUM

James Burton, Telecaster Master—Part II

Burton's most recent live guest stint with Elvis Costello is a fitting capper to a career that spans from Ricky N. to Elvis P. and beyond. Part I ended with a discussion of his work on some unlikely novelty hits.
—GW Editor



Wayne White

By Gene Santoro

Consistently inventive as he was under even the most adverse circumstances—imagine trying to shape a melody with Dino, Desi and Billy's sour harmonies ringing in your ears—Burton was soon on his way to amassing the enormous discography that even this two-part article can only pick at.

After cutting loose from Ricky Nelson, one of his earliest stints as a freelance was for the Everly Brothers, on two mid-sixties lp's. **Gone Gone Gone** (Warner Bros. W 1585) jumps to a tangy, twangy solo on "Ain't That Lovin' You Baby" and some nimble chicken-pickin' and banjo rolls on "The Drop Out"; **Beat & Soul** (Warner Bros. W 1605), on the other hand, flashes some fuzztone and multiple bends on "CC Rider" and some adroit interval-hopping and silky-smooth glisses on "The Girl Can't Help It."

Step Two in Burton's rise as a sessioneer came when certain producers began automatically slotting his distinctive Tele onto their recordings. Some of his more important gigs with Lee Hazlewood for Reprise were discussed in Part I; but at around the same time Capitol's Ken Nelson also heard about him and started dropping his ax onto a bewildering variety of discs. Take as an example **Can You Believe . . . The Geezinslaw Brothers** (Capitol T 2570), where JB turns in some tasty double-time picking on the aptly-titled "The Best Guitar Picker"; or catch **Introducing The Chapparral Brothers** (Capitol ST-2922); or listen to Buck Owens' **Open Up Your Heart** (Capitol ST 2640), where he stings the title track and "Cadillac Lane" with a trebly tone and clipped attack that recalls Buck's usual ax sidekick, Don Rich. He stayed in Bakersfield's honky-tonkland long enough to do some typically twangy and melodic work for Merle Haggard on **Swinging Doors** (Capitol SM-2585) and **I'm A Lonesome Fugitive** (Capitol SM-2702).

As his unparalleled fretwork became better known, Burton got some interesting calls. The Gram Parsons-era Byrds had him drop some guitar and dobro on the breakthrough **Sweetheart Of The Rodeo** (Columbia CS 9670); the other premier country-rockers of the day, Buffalo Springfield, tapped him to doubletrack snaky dobro slurs on Neil Young's "I Am A Child" (**Buffalo Springfield Again**, Atco 83226); and Judy Collins teamed him up with pedal steel great Buddy Emmons for her own classic country rocker (about the Springfield's Steve Stills) "Someday Soon" (**Who Knows Where The Time Goes**, Elektra EKS-74033).

One pre-Elvis oddity deserves mention here. Drummer Sandy Nelson had been a rock 'n' roll fixture, thanks to his instrumental albums, from 1961 on, and for **Rock 'n' Roll Revival** (Imperial LP 12400) he had Burton not only play on but co-arrange a number of cuts. "Be-Bop-A-Lula," for instance, finds the Telemeister executing straining slides that dance around the melody, leap up the fretboard to sting, then double back down via position playing. "Great Balls Of Fire" and "Blue Suede Shoes" share an unusual display of Burton's Chuck Berry chops that alone make this worth finding.

As is one of his two solo efforts. **Corn Pickin' & Slick Slidin'** (Capitol ST-2872) joins him with pedal steel trailblazer Ralph Mooney for some of the hottest, most biting frolics he's ever laid down, as this dynamic duo romps through a collection of country classics, augmented by Burton's

characteristically slurred dobro work. Unfortunately, while his second lp, **James Burton** (A&M SP 4293), clocks in stellar sidemen as well, it sounds like a set of drunken run-throughs.

Unfortunately, too, there is really no reason to buy the vast majority of the recordings Burton made with Elvis Presley between 1969 and 1977, since most of them buried that distinctive Tele under layers of production—strings, horns, backup singers, you name it. And so, aside from a glimmer here and there, the best places to actually hear Burton working with the King were released after Presley's death. **Elvis In Concert** (RCA CPL 2-2587) is a two-record set that contains two sides' worth of soundtrack from the CBS-tv special and two sides' worth of 1977 tour performances that feature rocking renditions of gems like "What'd I Say," "Johnny B. Goode" and "Little Sister." Also of interest is the sappily titled **Our Memories Of Elvis vols. 1 and 2** (RCA AQL1-3279, 3448). The first features Burton's matchless ability as a sideman/team player ("It's a masterpiece of ballad accompaniment," Robert Quine quite rightly asserts), as he wraps gentle filigrees around Elvis' often wobbly voice; the second boasts eight-and-a-half minutes of previously unreleased studio jamming on Dylan's "Don't Think Twice," with Burton forsaking his Tele for some smooth and speedy acoustic lyricism.

Luckily, Burton's workload with Presley was undemanding enough to allow him to sandwich in more (musically) rewarding pursuits. A prime example is Mike Nesmith's **Nevada Fighter** (RCA LSP-4497), whose title track delivers some of the most outrageous banjo-style picking the man has ever done, as well as some slinky dobro on "I Looked Away." And, in a more purely informative vein, he found time to do the Chevron Oil Company's (?!) **Music Maker Series** (Chevron M-11, M-12, M-13, M-14), a made-for-schools production that fills in—via interview segments—some of Burton's past and interests (his own biggest influences, he claims here, were John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley and Chet Atkins). Between reminiscences, he picks his way through bits of "Your Cheatin' Heart," "Wildwood Flower" and "Suzy-Q."

But by far the most musical gigs he landed during this period developed from his association with ex-Byrd/ Burrito Gram Parsons, whose vision guided a whole subsequent school of crossover country-rockers. Their two records together, **GP** (Warner Bros. MS 2123) and **Grievous Angel** (Warner Bros. MS 2171), marked early apexes of that school, as Burton and other members of the King's men switched musical gears to flesh out Parsons' fantasies. The gentle licks of "Hearts On Fire," snaky bends and trills on "I Can't Dance," running commentary behind the vocals on "Cash On The Barrelhead," brief but stunning chordal solo of "Love Hurts"—all attest to the full-blooded vigor and versatility of Burton's attack. But it's "Las Vegas" that's the killer, from the bursting hammered-on suspensions of the banjo-picked kickoff to the double-time running licks to the dramatic buildup of tension and the release in the solo's magnificent switchback climb and descent patterns.

Before the band could tour behind *Grievous Angel*, however, Parsons died; and Emmylou Harris, who'd sung harmony with him for that lp, inherited both his manager and his band. Now dubbed the Hot Band, their alternately revved-up and poignantly lyrical backing more than earned them their name. Under the direction of producer Brian Ahern, they waxed **Pieces Of The Sky** (Warner Bros. MS 2284), which deployed Burton's intense melodicism as well as his fire-breathing chicken-pickin' to outstanding effect. A year later, they went back into the studio for **Elite Hotel** (Reprise MS 2236), which captures Burton dabbling in phased effects. The title track proffers his lean doubling of the pedal steel for the key turnaround lick, a heady diminished climb snaking up the neck and

snapping pull-offs all the way back down; "One Of These Days" laces its phased fills gently about Emmylou's throbbing voice while leading to a solo that is pure Burton—a handful of notes worked with lyrical precision and an acute microtonal sense of pitchbending. And, of course, there's Emmylou's remake of "Las Vegas," which Burton buzzsaws through at full throttle without losing a nuance. As Quine puts it, "He'll always surprise you because he's always reaching for things he hasn't done before."

It's no surprise that producer Ahern would follow the path beaten by others like him to Burton's door and that, once there, he would stay there for other projects, too. First came Jonathan Edwards' **Rockin' Chair** (Reprise MS 2238) which, in addition to the twisty treble line threading through the title cut, includes the unusually hyper-tremoloed solo on "Favorite Song." Songwriter Rodney Crowell, whose tunes pop up frequently on Emmylou's discs, assembled the likes of Ry Cooder, Amos Garrett and Burton disciple Albert Lee (who took the maestro's place in the Hot Band in '76) for his own **Ain't Living Long Like This** (Warner Bros. BSK 3228), and had Burton perform a daredevil, interval-leaping line for a solo on the title song. And then there's Mary Kay Place's **Aimin' To Please** (CBS 34908), whose "You Can't Go To Heaven (If You Don't Have A Good Time)" offers unusual wah-wah fills, a crying dobro solo and a phased guitar lead.

When Elvis died in '77, Burton lined up some offbeat gigs. Rockabilly great Ronnie Hawkins (The Band began as his backing group in the early sixties) used him to cut **The Hawk** (UA/Liberty UA-LA 968 H), where Burton's Tele sounds creamy smooth with a dollop of reverb to round off the chicken-pickin'. Then Tony Sheridan (the Beatles were once his backing band in Hamburg) got Burton and the boys for **Tony Sheridan & The Elvis Presley TCB Band** (Cayman Musicorp Inc., no ser. #); Sheridan does his Elvis impersonation while Burton spins out double-tracked guitar all over "My Baby Left Me" and steps out for three breathtakingly different solos, displaying once again his apparently endless invention.

It's a gift born of the willingness to take chances. As Robert Quine incisively notes of his idol, "You'll hear him make mistakes on things because he's never content to repeat himself, he's always pushing to the limits of what he can do."

That, friends, is what's called music, and it's made James Burton the towering guitar hero that he is.

Star Tech

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Detroit. From there, the tour moved through the U.S. and Canada, posting sellouts everywhere and generating an extensive amount of media attention.

Since then, Fortney has gone on to work on the last movie project, *Under The Cherry Moon*, and tour dates in the U.S., U.K., Europe, Scandanavia and in Japan.

During the shows in England, Steve had the opportunity to help stage some after-show informal jams for Prince at clubs in the London area. All of the local rock royalty came out to the shows and were later invited to these impromptu club sets. Fortney found himself coaxing the likes of Ron Wood, Eric Clapton, Brian May, Sting, John Taylor and Eddie Martinez onstage to perform after Prince's set.

Currently, plans call for Steve to move to Minneapolis and to start working at the soon-to-be-completed PRN Productions Complex. It will be a state-of-the-art audio/visual/entertainment facility. He is interested in trying his hand in new fields. "Rock 'n' roll isn't accepted as a legitimate field to people in television and film. I want try to learn about filmmaking and editing." He also wants to go back to school to learn more about computers, real estate and personal finance. He has talked to his pal, Billy Gibbons, about some special guitar projects in the future.

"I'll be getting involved with the new facility and that's where I'll be. Unless I win the lottery—then I'm going fishing and maybe find a few of my friends and 'make' them go back to Hawaii with me on a big boat."

Part of the job is knowing what to do when there is not a whole lot of talking going on.

The last word: "It's very hard to get into this business. You've got to work very hard and make a lot of personal sacrifices. If you don't live in an area where there's a happening music scene, then you've got to find those situations.

"I don't see any new blood coming up in the guitar technical field. I see the same people rotating between all the big bands and that's pretty amazing! The only way to learn how to do the jobs is to get out there and learn by doing.

"It's important to be able to play guitar. It helps the artist if you can learn the little licks that they play so you can catch those 'hot notes' they try to hold on stage, so when they perform they capture the same sounds as their records. By playing, you hear what the guitarist hears, and can make critical adjustments. I also work with the monitor engineer on the onstage sound. You can find 'hot spots' on stage where the amps react to certain notes during solos and bring these spots to the attention of the guitarist. They can go out on stage and play and if they react positively it adds confidence not only to themselves, but their confidence in you. It shows them that you care. When things go smoothly, it makes the job fun. Not like going to a factory gig."

Jon "J.D." Dworkow is Guitar World's resident Star Tech. He had more to do with the completion of the Billy Idol lp than you'll ever know.

Sounding Board

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guitar bodies that looks good, polishes out easy and doesn't queer the body's natural tone. It's called "dope."

Not the kind some people smoke! This is legal stuff, "cellulose acetate butyrate dope," and it is used for covering fabric-skinned airplanes. You can usually bum enough to do a guitar, off some aircraft repair place.

Finally, don't copy Ed's—or anyone else's—designs. Use your own ideas, and make it look good.

Vince Taggart
Olathe, KS

[*Ed would agree with that last comment. As for the rest, we are running your letter, Vince, because it's useful info—but Ed's subliminal message is . . . a great guitar player can make a "log" sound like a Stradivarius. Ask Les Paul.—G.W. Ed.*]

Is Edward Our Altar-Ego?

The two reasons that I began to read Guitar World Magazine were the Jimi Hendrix Commemorative Issue of last year and because your competitor was getting overly constipated on black leather and chains and guitars that Dracula would have loved to impale his victims on.

It saddens me to see that you are becoming molded in the same fashion. How many ads do you have to run showing people how to get ripped off to learn heavy metal guitar? Does it have to be heavy metal all the time? I thought that the November '86 issue with Billy Gibbons on the cover would be a welcome refreshment, a good interview, but instead all he got was a quick review because Steve Rosen couldn't wait to have his buddy "Mr. Supreme Lord of the Guitar" Eddie Van Halen "interview" Les Paul. It was amusing to read Eddie's immense vocabulary skills, using "fuck" for every other word. I don't think that Les Paul found it amusing since he looked to me like he was going to throw up.

Joseph Micciche
Arcadia, CA

More Heavy Rock

In the last few years that I have been reading your magazine, I have been greatly entertained by the words, wit and wisdom of many of my favorite musicians, such as Yngwie Malmsteen, Adrian Belew, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Steve Stevens. I would appreciate it greatly if you would provide interviews with the guitar/bass teams of three of the most promising and important rock/metal acts of the eighties, Stryper, Metallica and Queensryche. These bands are the front line in a new musical revolution.

Arturo DeLeon
Defiance, OH

Bolin Rally

We would really like to see a feature on the late, great Tommy Bolin. Over the years, we have come to realize that there are lots of Bolin fans. That fact should come as no surprise because Tommy was an awesome player.

Dana Blankenship
Eden, NC

[*Steve Stevens thinks so, too. See his column elsewhere this issue.—G.W. Ed.*]

If You Like-a Uke, Uke Like-a You

As a ukulele player, I was amused by your article about Dick Dale (Tune-Ups Sept.'86) because he got his start on the ukulele.

One thing about the article which I thought was insulting was the phrase "real plastic ukulele." A plastic ukulele is not real and suggesting that one is implies that this instrument is a toy, which isn't a fair thing to say. I play a vintage ukulele which often brings compliments from guitarists on the sound. A toy instrument would almost never get compliments.

Tom Alexander
Pittsford, NY



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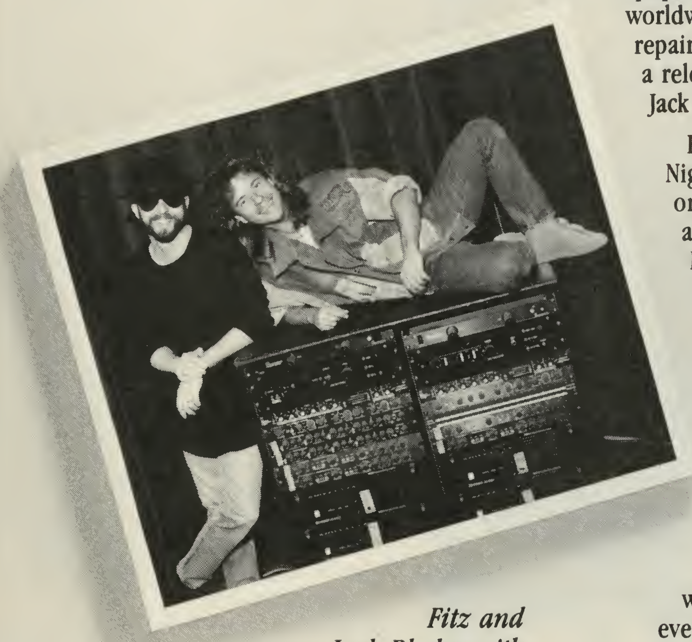
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Why Night Ranger has 63 "Furmans."

"The guys have plenty of gear in their racks, but a rack full of equipment is only as good as its weakest link. We played 243 shows worldwide in under 11 months, and *none* of the Furmans needed repair. They've proven their dependability under the pressures of a relentless road schedule." says Night Ranger Staff Technician Jack Jacobsen.

Furman equipment finds many different applications in Night Ranger's stage and studio setups. Each musician has one or more PL-8 or PL-PLUS Power and Light Modules to power and illuminate his racks. Alan "Fitz" Fitzgerald uses three MM-8 Mixers to combine his keyboards. The organs go through a QN-4 Quad Noise Gate, with each processed through a PQ-3 Parametric Equalizer. Jack Blades runs each of his basses through a PQ-3 and an LC-X Expander/Compressor/Limiter, mixes them with MM-8's and splits the feed with TX-3 Crossovers. Guitarist Jeff Watson and Drummer Kelly Keagy lend versatility to their home studios with PB-40 Patch Bays. And that's just scratching the surface.

Did Night Ranger get its 63 "Furmans" free for doing this ad? No way. Jacobsen says: "We bought, paid for, and were sold on our Furman Sound equipment years before we ever thought of endorsing it."



Fitz and Jack Blades with some of their Furmans

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Clapton

continued from page 58

soaring away to peaks the player had not visualized. Eric says he feels his inspiration in that direction comes from outside influences by the band. If everyone is playing really well, you can't help being inspired by that, and that drives you on, and suddenly you get to this point where you know that everyone, including you, is having a great time. And you're at the front of it, having the greatest time of all!

"You get to what seems like a peak. But suddenly you start *thinking* about what a great time you're having, and then it's gone. Or what I always do, without fail, is hit a bum note. I'll really be out there flying—I think: 'God, I'm flying'—then [*hums a sour note*] it's all over! Everyone in the band just goes: 'Aw, man!' You look around and they're all smiling. But if you can get to that, you can get back there within a space of a few minutes."

With John Mayall's band, those moments of ecstasy were frequent, he remembers. "With all the bands I've been with, I've found that time and place where you could just fly. Blind Faith was so short-lived, we didn't ever really groove. When we were rehearsing and hanging out before we ever toured, we did a lot of great stuff." As for the electricity between him and Jack Bruce in Cream: "He pushed me night after night to the point where it was really a question of just a battle, a war. I don't think he did it deliberately; it's just the way he is as a musician and as a guy. I mean, he has to clear a space around him and you can't get very close a lot of the time."

On the pressure to recreate some of his masterpieces, such as "Layla," and the demands made by the music industry machine of him as a major artist, Clapton is candid. "Within me, there's a lot of pressure, but that's mainly pressure caused by fans or managers or record producers. It's always so subtle, you begin to wonder if it's just you who's making it that way. The greatest things you do are always done by mistake, accidentally. I had no idea what "Layla" was going to be. It was just a ditty. When you get near to the end of it, that's when your enthusiasm starts building and you know you've got something really powerful. You can be so-so about it when you're making the track, singing the vocals. But if as you start to add stuff and mix it it becomes gross, then you really are in charge of something powerful. What I'm saying is, when I started to do that, it didn't feel like anything special to me. If you try to write something that's already got all of that, it's impossible. You just try to write something that's pleasing and then try to get it to that."

His art is soundly based, but many supremely talented musicians have fallen because they could not cope with the rigors of success. Survival for Eric Clapton

may be traced directly to his capacity for searching self-analysis and complete honesty, demanding the same truthful appraisal of himself by others. The cocky side of him that surfaced within Cream is still there, he admits, but under a disguise. If you put yourself up for trouble all the time, it's easy for others to see what your moves are—if you've got a potential enemy, he can see where he can hit you. My whole thing has been to be aggressive with my playing underneath a disguise of being laid-back. So when it comes, they're not expecting it."

On his future as a working musician, he says: "I was very shrewd to choose a role that I could be fulfilling at the age of 60. I read that Sting said that he was going into films because he didn't want to be like Mick Jagger, cavorting around the stage at 40. Well, I've never done that, so I don't have to worry. I can do what I've been doing all my life.

"Turning 40 was the nicest thing to happen to me in 10 years. I had a great time in my twenties, but I was very serious. Anyone who knew me then will tell you I was the straightest person that ever lived. Because of my attitude towards playing music, getting high was *out*—no time for that whatsoever. When I turned thirty, I did *all* of that, as much as I could. It got me into a pretty bad way.

"By the end of my thirties, I was really fed up. When I turned 40, I felt a lot more relaxed, because I didn't think I was going to live through my thirties. Drugs, music, religion, everything, was tugging and pulling me in different directions. Whatever I got into, I was desperate to be the best, to get it right. Now, that kind of need isn't there.

"I had this desperate need to transcend *something* or to become something other than what I was. I find I'm not so manic about that now. I'm a lot happier with what I am, even though I don't know what that is. But I can accept it more. I don't want to *be* somebody else."

And yes, he accepts that he is an enigma. "I *am* that, very much so, to myself, I've had a long time to get used to it, and I am very much a chameleon. I can be altered and changed beyond recognition by something that no one else can understand. It's very difficult to live with me because of that. My moods change a lot because of something I've *imagined* has happened. I really don't understand myself very well at all, but I'm not unhappy with that. I'm quite used to it, and I accept it, and I know the warning signs so I can avoid head-on collisions. As for the changes in my appearance: they were gradual, actually. It's only when you see pictures side by side that they look shockingly contrasted. They coincide with gradual shifts from one way of thinking to another. But my deepest wishes to play are basically still motivated the same way. The music or the playing *at the bottom* stays the same.

"When I'm taking a solo, the objective is to hit everybody, but timing and space have a lot to do with it. The objective, really, is to make everybody feel like they've just been struck by a bolt of lightning—and that's very difficult to do time after time! I don't do enough construction and pacing. I don't do enough of that, and I'd like to perfect it: make them all wait for the first note of the solo and then hit exactly the right note so they're all satisfied. I only do that every now and then . . ."

Apart from his talent, the other quality which has kept Clapton afloat and thriving for 20 years has been his humility. He knows he is a fine player, but believes the form of music he has chosen places him in the role of "stating a case for the blues," rather than *claiming* to be a true original. Because he is able to interpret uniquely that music, guitarists and singers everywhere recognize his honesty of purpose. His 1979 tour with Muddy Waters, particularly, struck an emotional chord in Clapton.

"The very first time I ever got three strings together on my guitar, when I was a young teenager, and put my fingers on them and played, it was to copy a Muddy Waters sound. It was a bell-like tone on the song 'Honey Bee.' I had no technique, of course, at that age and I had to copy completely. I spent a long, long time mimicking without any idea of direction other than knowing that what I was copying was what I wanted to do. That was blues-based guitar.

"Muddy Waters was the first blues man to get down to me, really into my soul. He has always made me feel this was the end of the road, as good as it could get. I listened later on to B.B. King, or Buddy Guy and many other great players. There was this element of showmanship, of commerciality, of learning, still going on with those people. When I heard Muddy for the first time, I knew that was *it*. That was the final statement of blues music with no dressing, and that has remained my opinion all my life. No one was better."

Touring Europe in 1979 alongside his hero was daunting for Clapton. "It was a treat, but also a severe test of my integrity. He was a man who had stuck to his guns all his life in his music. Every time I went off track during my part of the show, and played a quote from something, something melodic or even classically tinged, I got pangs of guilt. Because I felt that he was watching, and I was being untrue to my art. So at the same time as it being a great privilege and pleasure to be Muddy, is also made me very self-conscious, in a positive and constructive way."

Muddy, in many conversations with the young guitarist who, unlike him, had been hero-worshipped by pop and rock fans, set Clapton on a musical course for the rest of his life. "He kept hammering it

"I screamed, ran into the studio and grabbed it off of him. That guitar [the recently-retired Blackie] has some of me in it. To see someone else pick it up is unbearable."

home to me that there was nothing wrong with being a blues musician. He said a guitarist didn't have to be *appealing*, to play the biggest halls and sell the most records, to play well. I can never thank Muddy enough, really, for spelling it all out to me, that blues playing is beautiful, because it's from inside yourself."

Eric first met Muddy in 1966, during his period with John Mayall. The American singer came to do a British tour with Otis Spann. When Mike Vernon of Blue Horizon Records persuaded them to go into the studios in London, Eric was asked along with other players to work as a sideman. "Muddy paid me a lot of compliments and I took and immediate shine to him as a man. From then on, we kept in touch. Not only as a great musician, but as a person, he was one of the greatest, sweetest. We teamed up for tours and he took me under his wing, told me I was his son, gave me little clues or guidelines about what I should be doing and what he liked to hear me do. He was very instrumental in forming my correct identity as a blues musician."

Muddy admired Clapton's work, but when the two linked up for a European concert tour, Eric was petrified at being outclasssed by Muddy's power of simplicity. Once, when the blues master opened the show, and the crowd was ecstatic, a dejected Clapton gave everyone backstage the feeling that it would be impossible to follow such a performance. Muddy sensed Eric's feelings. Next night and every night after that, he seemed to temper his own show and came off smiling at Eric. "I've left 'em for you, Eric," he said smiling. The two men were close in their affection. And what Eric never knew was that on most nights, Muddy stood in the wings watching Clapton's show, saying: "Whooo, boy, whooo!"

In the early 1970s, when Eric became confused about his direction, Muddy's wisdom prevailed. Eric remembers, "I was starting to worry about being limited to performing as just a blues player. I started to write more varied material to get out of what I regarded as the trap of being just one kind of guitarist. But Muddy reinspired me, made me realize that to do just one thing well was enough. You see, when I listened to other guitarists, I went through a spell of trying to get flashier, like the younger guys. But I kept coming back to Muddy and the first music I had heard. Always, the maturity of his music got through to me. And although I still struggle to achieve it, that belief in pure blues is now deep rooted in me."

It is endemic for musicians of Clapton's vintage to "jam." The 1960s were not merely more innocent years for rock 'n' roll but also a period of discovery and the exchange of ideas. There was a keen competitive edge among the players, which was healthy in a commercial sense, but at the core there was more to share, artistically, than the players of the 1960s can enjoy. Today, when rock music is generated more by big business than by inspiration, it's difficult to grasp the pleasure musicians and audiences alike derive from jamming. Eric still enjoys the impromptu nature of it and indulges in a "jam" when it feels right.

His most notable jams in 1985 were with Sting, Dire Straits, Buddy Guy and, in different situations, with Lionel Richie and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

"When I went to see Sting in Milan, he more or less verbally forced me into it,"

says Eric. "He's a lovely man, and I felt like it, and it was great. I enjoyed it and was glad I did it. But it's not always that easy, because depending on how I get into the theater, I'm probably going to be on or near the stage anyway. And if they start beckoning you up, what are you gonna do?

"I love to play, but it's getting quite worrying now. When I want to see a concert, the convenient, accepted way is to get a limo and have someone drop me at the back door, get a couple of passes, go and say hello and then sit down. But then I face the prospect of being asked to play. And sometimes I really don't feel like it. Yet if I say no, I might be denying myself a great pleasure, and there's also the danger of insulting the person who's asked me." A visit to an Elton John concert in London posed no such problem. "I don't think I'd have helped or fitted in on that stage. Everything was so well worked-out, properly planned. Davey Johnstone, Elton's guitarist, came on at exactly the crucial points and played just the right thing. There was no place there for a jam involving me or anybody else."

The Dire Straits shows at London's Hammersmith Odeon were different. Eric jammed on stage on both nights of the band's gigs. He has always been enormously impressed by the guitar work of Mark Knopfler and even went through a

"If Eddie Van Halen likes what I play, then he must like what I liked. I've heard that he slowed down records of mine to learn the solos. That's dedication!"

period in 1984 of thinking that Mark's playing could eclipse his own. Such is the insecurity of Clapton. "I play down my own ability so much," he admits, "that I tend to think of myself as small potatoes when a great new talent comes along. I'm still in awe of Mark Knopfler. I don't know where he gets it from! But this business of comparing myself unfavorably with people of his caliber happens all the time. All I'm doing is allowing myself to enjoy something. The unfortunate thing is that to do that, I have to put myself into the background."

When the moment came and he went on stage with Knopfler, Eric says he "really didn't feel any less of a musician than him. I felt quite adequate and on the same sort of level. We both have our own method of doing things, and I felt I complemented him. I didn't go on stage and freeze and become paranoid, so we had a good time. We were ourselves. So you see, that *awareness* of the strengths of other people is only my way of allowing myself to enjoy the music." As well as the Dire Straits songs "Two Young Lovers" and "Solid Rock," Eric played "Cocaine" and "Further On Up The Road." From the applause, he need never have worried.

Not all jam-sessions are as pleasant or as musically fruitful as those Eric enjoyed with Dire Straits and Sting. "I met Stevie Ray Vaughan in Australia in 1985; he was just leaving and I was just arriving in the hotel lounge. Suddenly he said as we were about to split; 'Let's jam!'—and it set up this feeling of postponement, that sooner or later we'd be in the same town at the same time and there'd be this mammouth jam." A few months later, Eric, on a day off

in New York State, flew into Manhattan for a day to do some shopping. "That night, the word got out that Stevie Ray Vaughan was going to be in a rehearsal studio until about twelve o'clock. So I went to the rehearsal studio and proceeded to get loaded waiting for him. He didn't show up until four in the morning, fresh as a daisy having slept all day and into the night! So he was ready to *go*, and I was *gone*. It was almost the same situation as Australia, except that I was checking out and he was checking in. And I tried to play, and I made such a fool of myself. It was really horrendous. So, yes, there are definitely times when I regret jamming. And that feeling of postponement is still there . . . next time I see him we'll try to play."

How competitive, then, is a jam? "Between me and Stevie Ray and anyone else I'm jamming with, there's nothing. We're musicians, and we just play. But there *is* competition among the people around us. You can feel that vibe. And that goes on, like ripples in a pond, out into the world, out towards our respective followers, supporters, fans." Does that interaction get back to the individual musicians? No, says Eric. "Not when you have a good one-to-one relationship, which should have caused the jam in the first place. Because our understanding goes a lot deeper than what happens on the outside."

Buddy Guy, an early hero of Eric's from the period when he was about to launch Cream visited London in late 1985, and with his taste for jamming whetted, Eric tracked him to his hotel. "I said 'I'm coming down to see you at Dingwalls,' and immediately he said, 'You gonna play?' I said, dunno, see what happens. When Roger [Forrester] and I got to Dingwalls, it was packed. I'd been there before, but I'd forgotten how bizarre the place was. We went in the front door, got hassled by different kinds of people, couldn't see or hear the band because people were jammed in with their heads two inches from the ceiling!" Eric sought an easier way of seeing and hearing his friend, via the stage door "which actually opened onto the stage, or the floor next to it.

"So there we were, pressed up to the stage and Buddy was perfectly aware we were there. He carried through the show, and they were getting pretty loose. It seemed like they were making it up as they went along, and it was a great show. Then he just called me up. And there was no way out. What was I gonna do?

"He gave me his guitar—and that's always the hardest thing, playing a strange instrument. Half one's "front" is getting up, the next is trying to look as if you know what you're doing, on an instrument you've never played before. This was a brand-new custom-made guitar and I broke a string straight away. It was a blues jam, real jamming, and it was fantastic. I finished after about three numbers

and came off stage absolutely soaking wet. Had to change my shirt out in the open air, it was so wet. But that was a true jam, a great night."

Another happy link was with the fine singer Lionel Richie, who was on his way to the Live Aid concert in Philadelphia in his car when he heard Clapton's slot on that show, on his car radio. "He remembered meeting me years before and liked what he heard, so he wanted me to play on his record," says Clapton. "From that point on, he was following my itinerary around the States and trying to get me into the studio, to play on his record.

"Finally, he caught me in Seattle. He got on stage with me and sang on 'Knock On Wood' and 'You Don't Know Like I Know.' Great fun. He'd flown in with tapes of his new album, a producer and an engineer. And he booked some studio time, so we went to the studio, and I put guitar on one of his tracks. That was a great honor, because I like Lionel's work such a lot."

Clapton, born under the sign of Aries, is, according to Chris Stainton: "direct, forceful, energetic, outgoing, impulsive and loses his temper quickly. He's full of life and energy, and a pioneer. But then he has Scorpio rising, which makes him very secretive and poker-faced. You don't know what's going on behind the mask. He might be perfectly sweet on the surface, but somewhere else he might be loading his gun ready to shoot you. He has powerful emotions but they're bottled up . . . and they can only get a release through his music. Hence the intensity of his playing.

"His moon is also in Scorpio, which doubles the effect. This means he has a great need to eliminate things from his life. Drug addiction and alcoholism serve no purpose and he knows that. So he has now eliminated them from his life and they've gone forever. That's the strange thing about anyone with a strong Scorpio element: he has to undergo a period of trial, a deep and intense test period like Eric underwent. Without that, as just an Aries with the spirit of pioneering and leadership on its own, he wouldn't have the Scorpio spirit of tenacity, the ability to persevere doggedly on. Scorpio in Eric provides him with incredible resistance to setbacks. Nothing will ever put him off. He'll carry on, grinding onwards.

"There's another side to him, really sweet and graceful. He has Venus and Taurus in him, which brings a softness. He is heavily ruled by Mars in Pisces, which means that he's far more liable to break down and is much more emotional than we see on the surface. Pisces figures in Eric because it's the sign of music. That's his outlet for all his emotions. Without that sign figuring in him, I don't know what he'd do. Without music coming out of him, Eric would go berserk. Beneath the gruff exterior, there's gold in that man.

Vai

continued from page 41

'Why don't I apply myself like that?' It's really inspiring, his example. The man is amazing."

In spite of his obvious respect for the man and his music, Vai never really got much of a chance to stretch out and solo in Zappa's band, with the exception of one showcase tune, "Stevie's Spanking." This was Vai's one chance to pull out all the stops, lay on the wang bar, thrash and flail 'til his heart's content. As he puts it, "That was Frank's way of throwing me a piece of meat there."

One of his other great accomplishments in Zappa's band was his work on the cut "Jazz Discharge Party Hats" from *Man From Utopia*. For this piece, Vai had to transcribe an impromptu spoken-word rap that Zappa delivers in concert. Notating the natural rises and falls in the pitch of Frank's voice during this meandering discourse on skinny-dipping with groupies and other hijinx on the road, Vai then went into the studio and overdubbed an identical unison line on acoustic guitar, covering every word, every laugh, every *er*, *ah* and *um* that Frank uttered. It was a triumph of transcription. Vai calls it, "The hardest thing I ever tried to do. It took me so long to transcribe that and then to learn it on the guitar. It was such a chore. But after I had it down and after I practiced it until I was blue in the face, it was such a joy, such a riot."

Since leaving Zappa's employ, Vai's career has prospered. The *Flex-able* project was a considerable feat in itself, but there was much more to follow. Hooking up with Alcatrazz in the Fall of '84 gave him a new vehicle in which to burn. His playing on the group's *Disturbing The Peace* album (released in '85 on Capitol) shows a confident Vai in full command of his powers. Check out his triple-track unison solo on "Painted Lover," his two-handed virtuosity on "God Bless Video" and his insane solo showcase on "Lighter Shade Of Green."

There followed two notable session dates—work on Indian violinist L. Shankar's pop project for ECM, *Epidemics*, and featured soloing on the Bill Laswell-produced PIL project for John Lydon on Elektra Records.

On *Epidemics*, Vai is joined by former Brand X bassist Percy Jones. His playing on this album is fairly pedestrian, but his presence there creates an edge on an otherwise tame pop project. There are the patented Vai sound effects throughout. On "No Cure" he recreates the sick sound of a "vomiting" guitar that Jeff Beck so successfully pioneered on *Truth*. There are wicked intros and brief interludes, but no extended soloing *per se*, with the exception of "Full Moon," in which he scratches, scrapes and howls with his ax.

On *Album*, the infamous generic PIL



Eddie Malluk

Fully recovered from his ax theft, Vai does the Jimi on his new Performance "Annie Fanny" guitar.

project, Vai's playing is much more aggressive, possibly to complement the fierceness and nastiness of Lydon's snarling vocals. All the patented wang-bar tactics are very much in evidence and his playing in general is more dissonant, more "out" than he had previously exhibited on record. Of particular note is his manic solo on "Fishing," with its flurry of 32nd notes at the tag (in harmony, yet!), his screaming digital-repeat wail on "Home" and his awesome display on "Ease," possibly his greatest solo on record. The tune proceeds without much fanfare when suddenly Vai explodes for two-and-a-half minutes of unabashed madness—hammer-ons, nasty wang-bar stuff, flurries of 32nd notes, taking it out on the tag in a blaze of sonic insanity.

One other project came Vai's way before hooking up with Roth. A film project. Namely, his contribution to the film *Crossroads*, the story of a young white blues enthusiast (portrayed by Ralph Macchio) who seeks the truth from a wizened old bluesman of the South. Vai not only contributes guitar parts to the soundtrack, he also appears on screen as Jack Butler, the satanic figure playing a wicked six-string.

Being in the film was a kick, says Vai, but working side-by-side on the soundtrack with Ry Cooder was something of a revelation for Steve.

"Ry Cooder is one of the best groove players I've ever witnessed in my life," he says with enthusiasm. "I've never seen anybody so strong in the groove. I practiced on time a lot. For a long period, from 1980 to 1981, I concentrated totally on my sense of timing. It's something that you really gotta keep in touch with. That's one of the first things that goes when you don't concentrate on it; for me, that is. So I practiced a lot and got it together, then left it for a while and was slapped in the face when I played with Ry Cooder. He is truly a living, breathing master."

Vai and Cooder collaborated closely on the film's finale, the showdown sequence in which the devilish Jack Butler challenges the young blues apprentice to a six-string duel. "I'm playing all my parts," says Steve, "and when the other guy goes into his classical fast thing, that's me, too. I think Ry did a lot of the other stuff with Arlen Roth, who for some reason didn't get proper credit in the film. Arlen worked very hard on the project. He taught Ralph Macchio how to hold and finger the guitar to make it look realistic. And he recorded a lot of the slide guitar parts throughout the film, along with Ry." Credit where credit is due.

Which brings us to *Eat 'Em And Smile*. Vai struts his virtuoso stuff throughout this killer album. It's the most diverse package of sounds that Steve has ever been associated with. From the talking wah-wah intro on "Yankee Rose" to the synchronized hyperdrive of "Elephant Gun" and "Big Trouble" to his Hendrix-cum-Wes octave playing on "Ladies Nite In Buffalo," it's easily Vai's most versatile performance to date. And dig his B.B. King-styled solo on "Shy Boy" or his mellow jazzbo comping on the big-band chart to "That's Life," the Sinatra anthem. Or his cool finger-picked chording (courtesy of Cooder) on "Goin' Crazy." Yngwie couldn't do all this.

Vai's talent goes well beyond the obvious wang-bar theatrics and two-handed pyrotechnics. Yes, he has evolved a whole lexicon of expression for each of those modern-day flash techniques. Yes, he flies

In spite of Vai's respect for Van Halen, he's not about to bow down to him.

around the stage in tight pants, enticing the girlies. But he's not your average lunkhead. The guy's a *musician*, an artist. We're going to be hearing from him well into the 21st century.

I can just picture Vai in the year 2035, a lively, young-at-heart septuagenarian hunched over some exotic, laser-driven multi-stringed instrument, performing classical works at a music symposium convening on the moon. But I digress.

Coming back down to earth, Vai puts his career into perspective. "Of course, there are certain things I can't do on a David Lee Roth album that I can do on a solo album or some other outside project. But right now, we're in this for a while. We're hoping that this is going to stick together so we can do a few more albums and tours. I mean, I love playing with Dave. He's got a great sense of humor, which is something I need, especially on the road. And he gives me all the rope I need. I get to express myself the way I like in this band, which is great."

He pauses and adds with a chuckle, "And if I were to do a solo album, it would be strictly for guitar players. You know . . . 'Check this out, you guys.' Just to express myself in another area and to give other guitarists a kick." I can't wait for that one.

A Steve Vai Axology

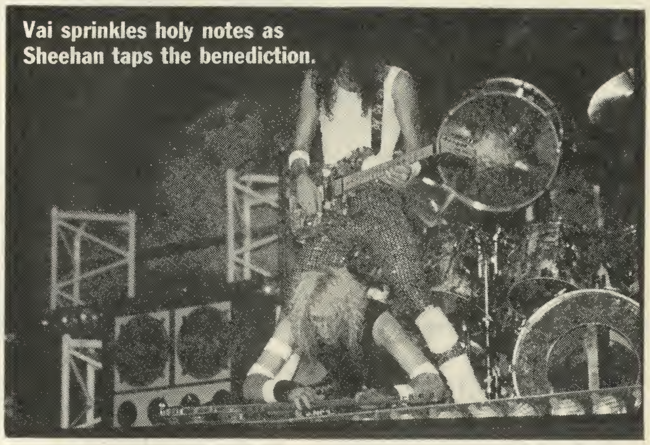
At the outset of the David Lee Roth tour, most of Steve's guitars were stolen. All except his green Charvel, his main ax. "Thank God I had that one with me," he sighs. "I keep it with me all the time. But all the others are gone. They were left locked up in a theater in a big giant container . . . left overnight. They just went in there and snip-snip."

Most proud owners of several custom-made jobs would've cried. But Steve's attitude was basically, "Whattaya gonna do?" Without hesitating, he went out and bought a bunch of necks and a bunch of bodies at Performance Guitars (6301½ Yucca St. Hollywood, CA 90028) and built four of his own in a week, just in time to make the tour.

All the guitars have Floyd Rose tremolo systems recessed into the body to allow the strings to go sharp (a Vai trademark). He uses DiMarzio pickups with a five-way toggle switch set-up and prefers D'Addario strings, .009 through .042. Of the four Performance guitars, one has a maple neck, one has a rosewood neck and two are mahogany. One is decorated with a blue and red dot spray paint motif, another is orange, one is splattered with pictures of naked ladies from vintage Playboys and another has excerpts from the Playboy comic strip "Annie Fannie."

Vai's onstage set-up is incredible. His signal goes mono from the preamp section of a Marshall amplifier and from a separate Carvin X-100B amp into his processing rack, then into various Yamaha P-2201 power amps and out of eight stereo cabinets made by Flag Systems, located at different points on the stage.

His processing rack has a custom-made pedalboard made for him by Bob Bradshaw. Vai has different "pet names" for the presets on his pedalboard: "Meat-1" is echo, "Meat-2" is chorus, "God" is an octave divider, "Love" is the clean Carvin amp, "Hate" is the dirty Marshall preamp sound, "Schmear" is a long echo, "Hell" is the distortion button, "Putz" is his trigger for the Yamaha SPX-90 signal processor, "Glitz" is reverb and "Bigger" is chorus.

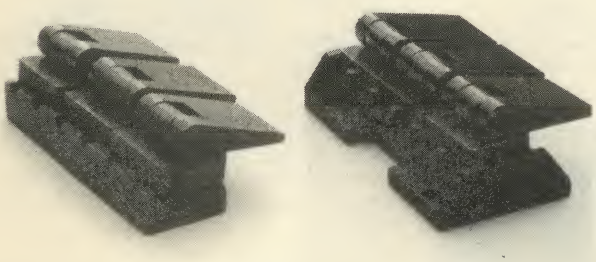


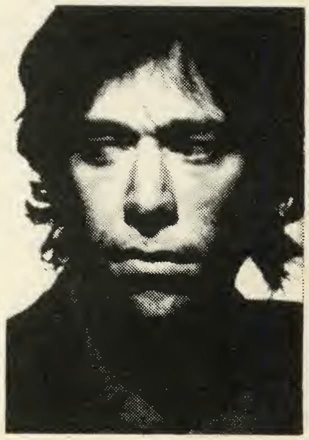
Vai sprinkles holy notes as Sheehan taps the benediction.

Eddie Malluk

Vai is especially fond of his Yamaha SPX-90, which includes a multitude of possibilities, including: stereo echo, tremolo, reverb, flanger, reverse gate, compression, pitch change, sampling, auto pan, triggered pan, delay vibrato and EQ.

His other effects include a Roland SDE-3000 digital delay, an Ibanez SDR-1000 stereo digital reverb, a Yamaha D1500 digital delay, an Eventide SP2016 signal processor, an Eventide Harmonizer, a DBX 160 Compresser/Limiter, a Drawmer dual noise gate and two Rane mixers. —Bill Milkowski





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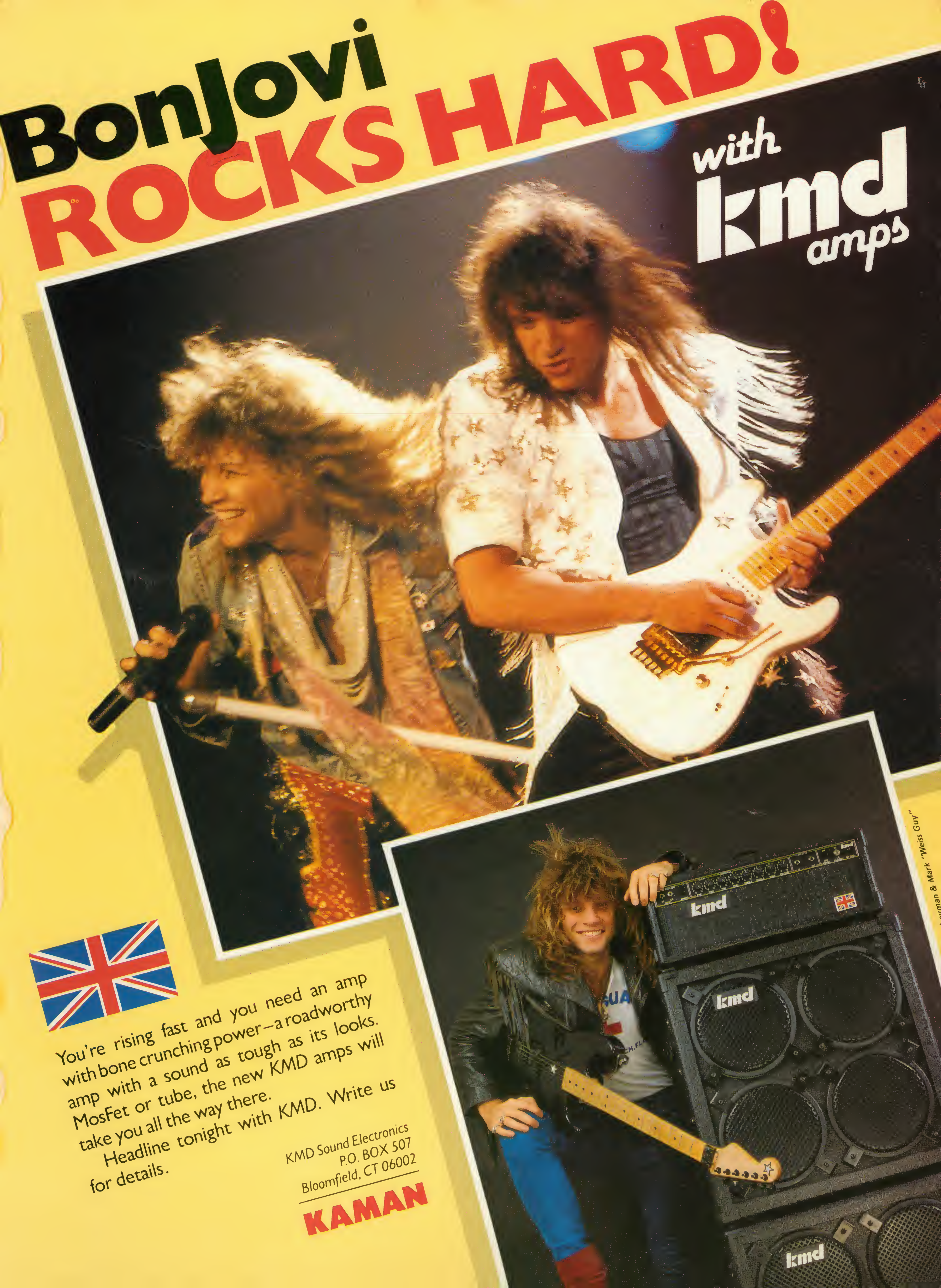
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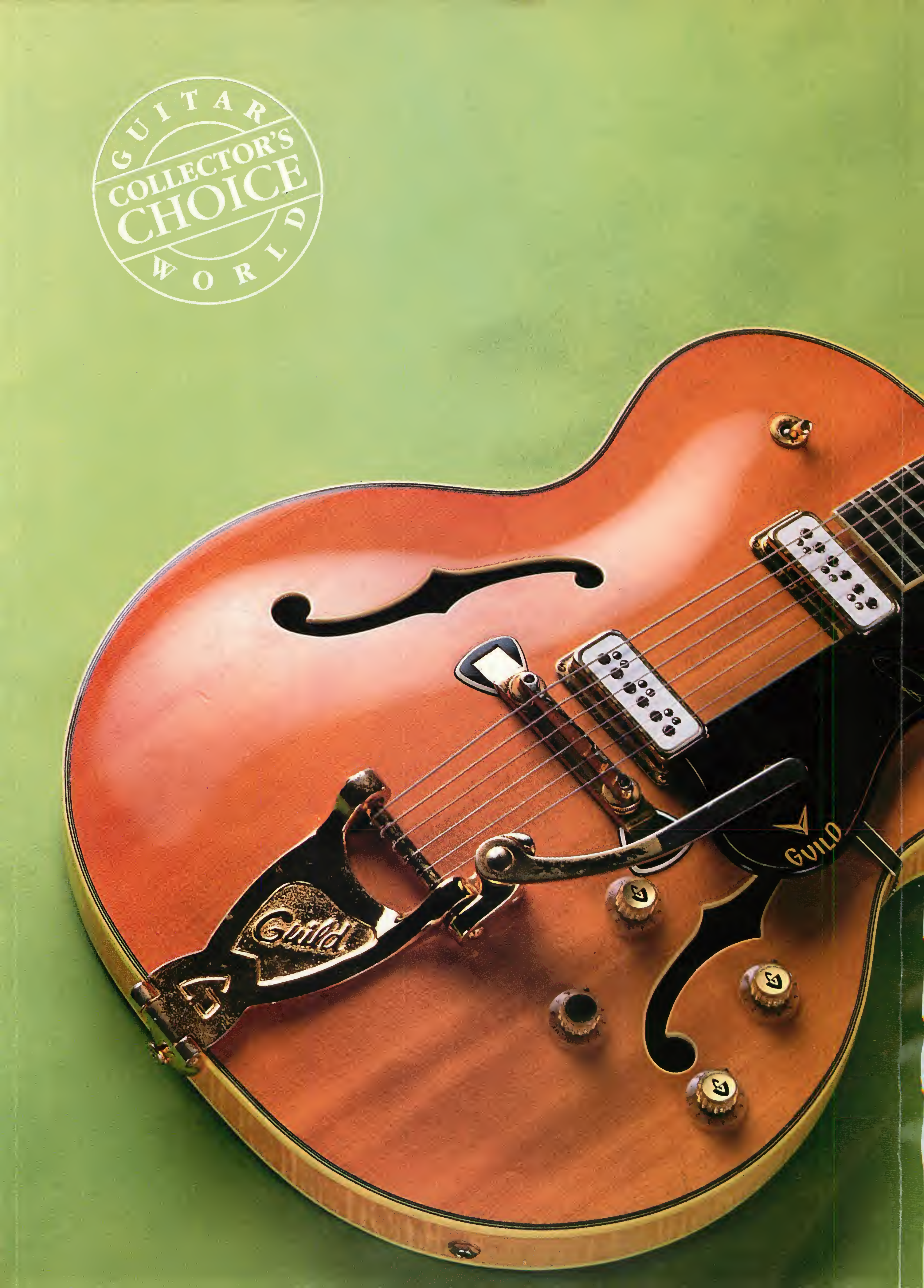
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1963 Guild Duane Eddy

Serial number 27111
Found for Guitar World by Perry A. Margouleff
Owned by Keith Lentin, New York, N.Y.
Photographed by John Peden

COLLECTOR'S CHOICE — GUITAR WORLD

The Twang's The Thang

Guild thought the Duane Eddy model would take off in the swingin' sixties, but today, the world's biggest collector of these flamboyant guitars is . . . Duane Eddy.

By Perry A. Margouleff and Jay Scott

When Duane Eddy, one of America's guitar heroes, decided that he should have his own model of guitar, his manager approached the Guild Company with the idea and they gladly agreed to build one. Guild utilized its Stuart X-500 model as a starting point, but reduced the depth of the body to make it more comfortable to play onstage. Though they retained its neck, carved spruce top and solid, flamed maple back and sides, they added DeArmond pickups, which Duane preferred to humbucking pickups. In addition, he had them put on a Bigsby, as the wiggle stick was one of the trademarks of his sound. This excellent combination of acoustics and electronics resulted in a clear, deep tone. They anointed it the DE-500. It should be noted that this was the first time Guild ever put a Bigsby on one of the company's guitars, which would later become a standard feature on many of the company's popular models.

When Guild introduced its line of Duane Eddy Rock 'n' Roll guitars in 1963, neither the manufacturer nor the artist could have imagined what an unprecedented commercial failure the new instrument would be. Indeed, the predecessor of the DE-500 Deluxe, the X-500, had been one of the company's best-selling models. A derivative of the illustrious Epiphone Emperor, which had successfully challenged Gibson's Super 400 and L5 for jazz guitar supremacy during the thirties, forties and fifties, the X-500 was Guild's most ornate and popular archtop. This 17-inch-wide beauty



Courtesy Chrysalis

This Art Of Noise publicity shot features Duane and the backs of the band's members.



Dan Zede

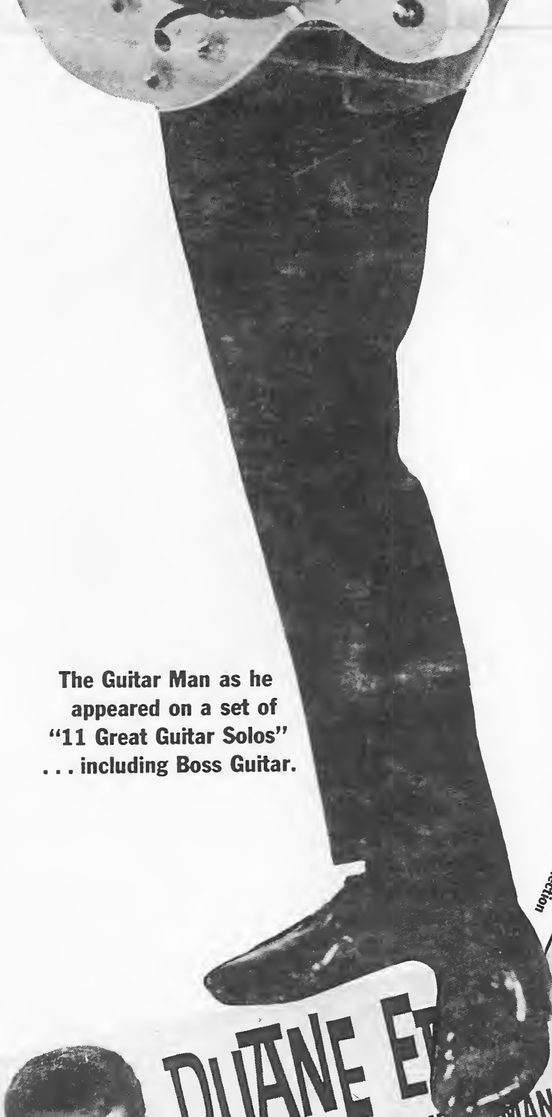
had accumulated a large contingent of endorsers and devotees, including George Barnes, Billy Bauer, Don Arnone and Johnny Smith, who helped design Guild's Johnny Smith Award Model before he became involved with the development of the Gibson Jazz Standard that bears his name.

However, when Guild thinned the X-500's body from three-and-a-half inches to two inches and added a Bigsby vibrato—the only real differences between the X-500 and the Duane Eddy Deluxe—jazz players, until recently, failed to respond to the new instrument despite the popularity of the guitar's forebears. Although Guild literature and catalogs pitched the Duane Eddy models to "twang artists and jazzmen" alike, Duane Eddy remains the only major artist to ever have been associated with the instrument. Production records for the model are unavailable, but the extreme scarcity of extant examples suggests that few were produced; nobody bought them. Even the less-expensive DE-400 Standard is rare. This model employed more modest appointments than its brother—a rosewood fingerboard instead of ebony, pearloid inlays (not real pearl and abalone), less binding and chrome parts instead of gold.

Despite its opulent good looks, the Duane Eddy series didn't make it with the public. In fact, the model was an imitative late-comer—Gibson had successfully culled a large portion of the thin hollow-body market with its own revolutionary thinline electric years before Guild slimmed its X-500 to make the Duane Eddy guitar. However, things were considerably different overseas, where the interest in more conventional-style hollow-body guitars, and Duane Eddy himself, remains high.

"The re-issue of about two years ago did do pretty well in the European market," explains Guild Vice President George Gruhn, "which is interesting when you consider that it really wasn't the 'twang' players going for it. This guitar is a very versatile instrument, perfectly suited for jazz. The Europeans seem to appreciate that fact more, I guess."

Happily, the past's debacle becomes the present's collectible, and the Duane Eddy model's initial lack of sales success, and Guild's discontinuation of the guitar, has made it a rarity today. The original artist, of course, is very much present these days, and you can catch his sound on MTV, where he is featured in a recent Art Of Noise video playing "The Peter Gunn Theme."



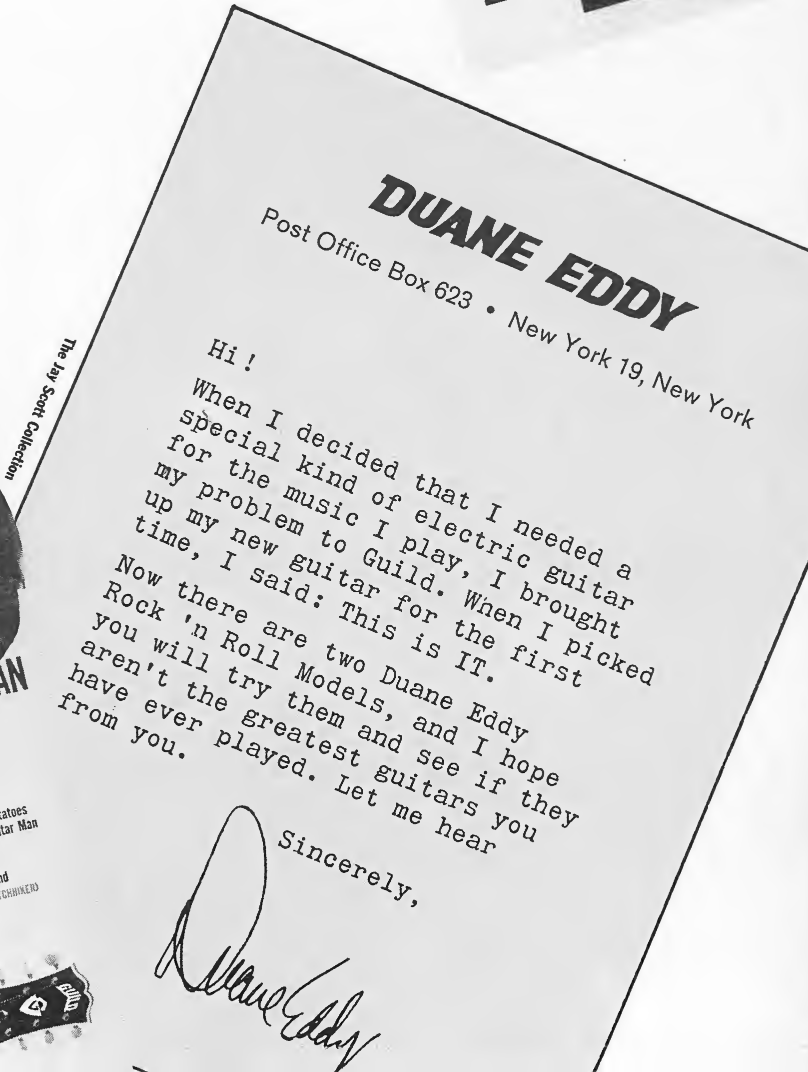
The Guitar Man as he appeared on a set of "11 Great Guitar Solos" . . . including Boss Guitar.





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